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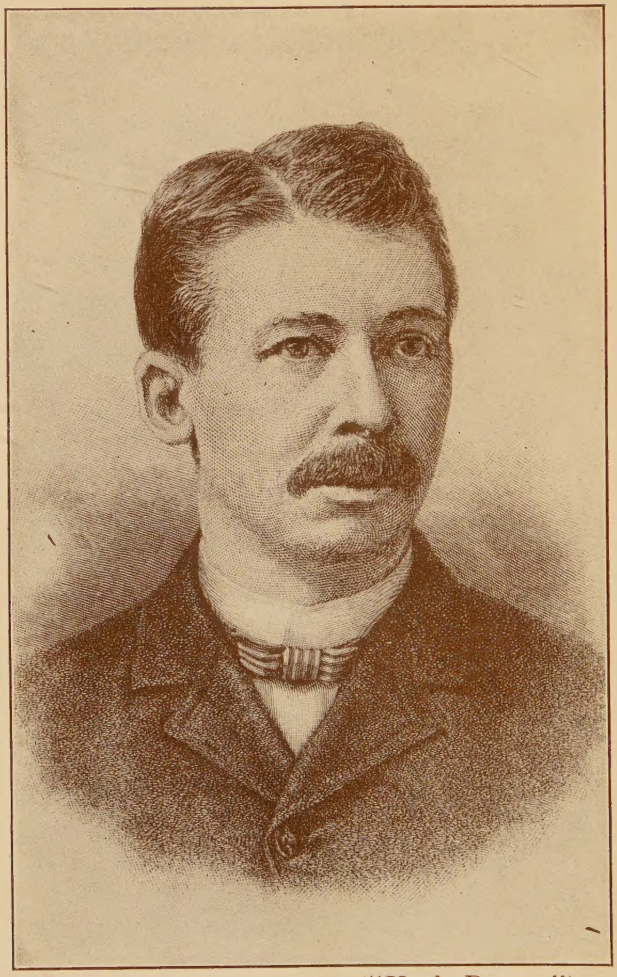

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS ("Uncle Remus")

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Edited and Introduced by
JOHN FINLEY, LL.D.

COMPILED BY NELLA BRADDY

"What is the joy of heaven but improvement in the things of the spirit?"

WILLIAM BLAKE

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VOLUME XXIII

DECEMBER 1–16

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SONS

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FIRST EDITION

WHEN ICICLES HANG BY THE WALL

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
To-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;
To-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THE genesis of the University Library is a group of books, the first of which we published more than twenty-five years ago under the title "Little Masterpieces." The material included in these volumes was selected by able editors and writers whose experience was great and whose taste was excellent. As individual volumes the sale through the years was very large. Later the books were gathered in a set and called The Pocket University and in this form many thousands reached the homes of contented buyers.

The publishers most gratefully acknowledge their debt to the editors who compiled the original volumes: Bliss Perry, Henry Van Dyke, Hardin Craig, Thomas L. Masson, Asa Don Dickinson, the late Hamilton W. Mabie, George Iles, the late Dr. Lyman Abbott, and others.

One third of the selections, perhaps, that were printed in the volumes of the Pocket University are included in the University Library but the sequence has been entirely changed and the scope of the set greatly broadened. Fully two thirds of the material in these books is new and the literature of the world has been ransacked to find appropriate text to fit the needs of the modern public. Thanks are due to Christopher Morley for help in selecting the essays, to Keith Henney for help in selecting the scientific articles, to Asa Don Dickinson for general advice, and to Misses Elsbeth McGoodwin, Eleanor Meneely, and Silvia Saunders for signal service in the actual arrangement of the volumes.

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READING FOR DECEMBER 1–16

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DECEMBER 1

(James Hogg, born December 1, 1770)

KILMENY*

BONNY Kilmeny gaed up the glen;
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring,—
The scarlet hypp, and the hindberrye,
And the nut that hung frae the hazel-tree;
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
And lang may she seek i' the green-wood shaw:
Lang the laird of Duneira blame,
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame.

When many a day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
When mass for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
When the bedesman had prayed, and the dead-bell rung;

*From "The Queen's Wake."

Late, late in a gloamin, when all was still,
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,—
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;
When the ingle lowed with an eiry leme,
Late, late in the gloamin Kilmeny came hame!

"Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?
Lang hae we sought baith holt and dean,—
By linn, by ford, and green-wood tree;
Yet you are halesome and fair to see.
Where gat you that joup o' the lily sheen?
That bonny snood of the birk sae green?
And these roses, the fairest that ever was seen?
Kilmeny Kilmeny, where have you been?"

Kilmeny looked up with a lovely grace,
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
As still was her look, and as still was her ee,
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been she knew not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare,
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew;
But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
And a land where sin had never been,—
A land of love, and a land of light,
Withouten sun or moon or night;

Where the river swa'd a living stream,
And the light a pure celestial beam:
The land of vision it would seem,
A still, an everlasting dream.

In yon green-wood there is a waik,
And in that waik there is a wene,
And in that wene there is a maike
That neither has flesh, blood, nor bane;
And down in yon green-wood he walks his lane.
In that green wene Kilmeny lay,
Her bosom happed wi' the flowerets gay;
But the air was soft, and the silence deep,
And bonny Kilmeny fell sound asleep;
She kend nae mair, nor opened her ee,
Till waked by the hymns of a far countrye.

She wakened on a couch of the silk sae slim,
All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim;
And lovely beings around were rife,
Who erst had travelled mortal life;
And aye they smiled, and 'gan to speer:
"What spirit has brought this mortal here?"

"Lang have I journeyed the world wide,"
A meek and reverend fere replied;
"Baith night and day I have watched the fair
Eident a thousand years and mair.
Yes, I have watched o'er ilk degree,
Wherever blooms femenitye;
But sinless virgin, free of stain,
In mind and body, fand I nane.

Never, since the banquet of time,
Found I a virgin in her prime,
Till late this bonny maiden I saw,
As spotless as the morning snaw.
Full twenty years she has lived as free
As the spirits that sojourn in this countrye.
I have brought her away frae the snares of men,
That sin or death she may never ken."

They clasped her waist and her hands sae fair;
They kissed her cheek, and they kemed her hair;
And round came many a blooming fere,
Saying, "Bonny Kilmeny, ye're welcome here;
Women are freed of the littand scorn;
O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken, what a woman may be!
Many a lang year in sorrow and pain,
Many a lang year through the world we've gane
Commissioned to watch fair womankind,
For it's they who nurice the immortal mind.
We have watched their steps as the dawning
shone,
And deep in the greenwood walks alone;
By lily bower and silken bed
The viewless tears have o'er them shed;
Have soothed their ardent minds to sleep,
Or left the couch of love to weep.
We have seen! we have seen! but the time must
come,
And the angels will weep at the day of doom!

"O, would the fairest of mortal kind
Aye keep the holy truths in mind,
That kindred spirits their motions see,
Who watch their ways with anxious ee,
And grieve for the guilt of humanitye!
O, sweet to Heaven the maiden's prayer,
And the sigh that heaves a bosom sae fair!
And dear to Heaven the words of truth
And the praise of virtue frae beauty's mouth!
And dear to the viewless forms of air
The minds that kythe as the body fair!

"O bonny Kilmeny ! free frae stain,
If ever you seek the world again,—
That world of sin, of sorrow and fear,—
O, tell of the joys that are waiting here;
And tell of the signs you shall shortly see;
Of the times that are now, and the times that shall
be."

They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
And she walked in the light of a sunless day;
The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
The fountain of vision, and fountain of light;
The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
And the flowers of everlasting blow.
Then deep in the stream her body they laid,
That her youth and beauty never might fade;
And they smiled on heaven, when they saw her lie
In the stream of life that wandered by.
And she heard a song,—she heard it sung,
She kend not where; but sae sweetly it rung,

It fell on her ear like a dream of the morn,—
"O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken, what a woman may be!
The sun that shines on the world sae bright,
A borrowed gleid frae the fountain of light;
And the moon that sleeks the sky sae dun,
Like a gowden bow, or a beamless sun,
Shall wear away, and he seen nae mair;
And the angels shall miss them, travelling the air.
But lang, lang after baith night and day,
When the sun and the world have elyed away,
When the sinner has gane to his waesome doom,
Kilmeny shall smile in eternal bloom!"

They bore her away, she wist not how,
For she felt not arm nor rest below;
But so swift they wained her through the light,
'Twas like the motion of sound or sight;
They seemed to split the gales of air,
And yet nor gale nor breeze was there.
Unnumbered groves below them grew;
They came, they past, and backward flew,
Like floods of blossoms gliding on,
In moment seen, in moment gone.
O, never vales to mortal view
Appeared like those o'er which they flew,
That land to human spirits given,
The lowermost vales of the storied heaven;
From whence they can view the world below
And heaven's blue gates with sapphires glow,—
More glory yet unmeet to know.

They bore her far to a mountain green,
To see what mortal never had seen;
And they seated her high on a purple sward,
And bade her heed what she saw and heard,
And note the changes the spirits wrought;
For now she lived in the land of thought.—
She looked, and she saw nor sun nor skies,
But a crystal dome of a thousand dyes;
She looked, and she saw nae land aright,
But an endless whirl of glory and light;
And radiant beings went and came,
Far swifter than wind or the linkèd flame;
She hid her een frae the dazzling view;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw a sun on a summer sky,
And clouds of amber sailing by;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had glens and mountains gray;
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,
And marlèd seas, and a thousand isles;
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,
And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,
Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay
The sun and the sky and the cloudlet gray,
Which heaved and trembled and gently swung;
On every shore they seemed to be hung;
For there they were seen on their downward plain
A thousand times and a thousand again;
In winding lake and placid firth,—
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

Kilmeny sighed and seemed to grieve,
For she found her heart to that land did cleave;
She saw the corn wave on the vale;
She saw the deer run down the dale;
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,
And the brows that the badge of freedom bore;
And she thought she had seen the land before.

She saw a lady sit on a throne,
The fairest that ever the sun shone on:
A lion licked her hand of milk,
And she held him in a leish of silk;
And a leifu' maiden stood at her knee,
With a silver wand and a melting ee;
Her sovereign shield till love stole in,
And poisoned all the fount within.

Then a gruff untoward bedesman came,
And hundit the lion on his dame;
And the guardian maid wi' the dauntless ee,
She dropped a tear, and left her knee;
And she saw till the queen frae the lion fled,
Till the bonniest flower of the world lay dead;
A coffin was set on a distant plain,
And she saw the red blood fall like rain:
Then bonny Kilmeny's heart grew sair,
And she turned away, and could look nae mair.

Then the gruff grim carle girnèd amain,
And they trampled him down, but he rose again;
And he baited the lion to deed of weir,
Till he lapped the blood to the kingdom dear;

And weening his head was danger-preef,
When crowned with the rose and clover leaf,
He gowled at the carle, and chased him away
To feed wi' the deer on the mountain gray.
He gowled at the carle, and he gecked at Heaven;
But his mark was set, and his arles given.
Kilmeny a while her een withdrew;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw below her fair unfurled
One half of all the glowing world,
Where oceans rolled, and rivers ran,
To bound the aims of sinful man.
She saw a people, fierce and fell,
Burst frae their bounds like fiends of hell;
There lilies grew, and the eagle flew,
And she herked on her ravening crew,
Till the cities and towers were wrapt in a blaze,
And the thunder it roared o'er the lands and the seas.
The widows they wailed, and the red blood ran,
And she threatened an end to the race of man:
She never lened, nor stood in awe,
Till caught by the lion's deadly paw.
Oh! then the eagle swinked for life,
And brainzelled up a mortal strife;
But she flew north, or flew she south,
She met wi' the gowl of the lion's mouth.

With a mooted wing and waefu' maen,
The eagle sought her eiry again;

But lang may she cower in her bloody nest,
And lang, lang sleek her wounded breast,
Before she sey another flight,
To play wi' the norland lion's might.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing nature's law,
The singer's voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of man were by,
And all was love and harmony;—
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like the flakes of snaw on a winter's day.

Then Kilmeny begged again to see
The friends she had left in her own countrye,
To tell the place where she had been,
And the glories that lay in the land unseen;
To warn the living maidens fair,
The loved of heaven, the spirits' care,
That all whose minds unmeled remain
Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

With distant music, soft and deep,
They lulled Kilmeny sound asleep;
And when she awakened, she lay her lane,
All happed with flowers in the green-wood wene.
When seven long years had come and fled;
When grief was calm, and hope was dead;
When scarce was remembered Kilmeny's name,
Late, late in the gloamin, Kilmeny came hame!
And O, her beauty was fair to see,

But still and steadfast was her ee!
Such beauty bard may never declare,
For there was no pride nor passion there;
And the soft desire of maidens' een
In that mild face could never be seen.
Her seymar was the lily flower,
And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower;
And her voice like the distant melodye
That floats along the twilight sea.
But she loved to raike the lanely glen,
And keeped afar frae the haunts of men;
Her holy hymns unheard to sing,
To suck the flowers and drink the spring.
But wherever her peaceful form appeared,
The wild beasts of the hills were cheered;
The wolf played blythely round the field;
The lordly byson lowed and kneeled;
The dun deer wooed with manner bland,
And cowered aneath her lily hand.
And when at even the woodlands rung,
When hymns of other worlds she sung
In ecstasy of sweet devotion,
O, then the glen was all in motion!
The wild beasts of the forest came,
Broke from their bughts and faulds the tame,
And goved around, charmed and amazed;
Even the dull cattle crooned, and gazed,
And murmured, and looked with anxious pain
For something the mystery to explain.
The buzzard came with the throstle-cock,
The corby left her houf in the rock;

The blackbird alang wi' the eagle flew;
The hind came tripping o'er the dew;
The wolf and the kid their raike began;
And the tod, and the lamb, and the leveret ran;
The hawk and the hern attour them hung,
And the merl and the mavis forhooyed their young;
And all in a peaceful ring were hurled:
It was like an eve in a sinless world!

When a month and a day had come and gane,
Kilmeny sought the green-wood wene;
There laid her down on the leaves sae green,
And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.
But O the words that fell from her mouth
Were words of wonder, and words of truth!
But all the land were in fear and dread,
For they kendna whether she was living or dead.
It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain;
She left this world of sorrow and pain,
And returned to the land of thought again.

JAMES HOGG.

DECEMBER 2

MAUPRAT*

ON THE eve of M. de la Marche's departure, and after the abbe's letter had been sent, a little incident had happened in Varenne which, when I heard of it in America, caused me considerable surprise and pleasure. Moreover, it is linked in a remarkable manner with the most important events of my life, as you will see later.

Although rather seriously wounded in the unfortunate affair in Savannah, I was actively engaged in Virginia, under General Greene, in collecting the remains of the army commanded by Gates, whom I considered a much greater hero than his more fortunate rival, Washington. We had just learnt of the landing of M. de Ternay's squadron, and the depression which had fallen on us at this period of reverses and distress was beginning to vanish before the prospect of reënforcements. These, as a fact, were less considerable than we had expected. I was strolling through the woods with Arthur, a short distance from the camp, and we were taking advantage of this short respite to have a talk about other matters than Cornwallis and the infamous Arnold. Long saddened by the sight of the woes of the American nation, by the fear of seeing

*From "Mauprat."

injustice and cupidity triumphing over the cause of the people, we were seeking relief in a measure of gaiety. When I had an hour's leisure I used to escape from my stern toils to the oasis of my own thoughts in the family at Sainte-Sévère. At such a time I was wont to tell my kind friend Arthur some of the comic incidents of my entry into life after leaving Roche-Mauprat. At one time I would give him a description of the costume in which I first appeared; at another I would describe Mademoiselle Leblanc's contempt and loathing for my person, and her recommendation to her friend Saint-Jean never to approach within arm's length of me. As I thought of these amusing individuals, the face of the solemn hidalgo, Marcasse, somehow arose in my memory and I began to give a faithful and detailed picture of the dress, and bearing, and conversation of this enigmatic personage. Not that Marcasse was actually as comic as he appeared to my imagination; but at twenty a man is only a boy, especially when he is a soldier and has just escaped great dangers, and so is filled with careless pride at the conquest of his own life. Arthur would laugh right heartily as he listened to me, declaring that he would give his whole collection of specimens for such a curious animal as I had just described. The pleasure he derived from my childish chatter increased my vivacity, and I do not know whether I should have been able to resist the temptation to exaggerate my uncle's peculiarities, when suddenly at a turn in our path we found ourselves in the presence of a

tall man, poorly dressed, and terribly haggard, who was walking toward us with a serious, pensive expression, and carrying in his hand a long, naked sword, the point of which was peacefully lowered to the ground. This individual bore such a strong resemblance to the one I had just described that Arthur, struck by the parallel, burst into uncontrollable laughter, and moving aside to make way for Marcasse's double, threw himself upon the grass in a convulsive fit of coughing.

For myself, I was far from laughing; for nothing that has a supernatural air about it fails to produce a vivid impression even on the man most accustomed to dangers. With staring eyes and outstretched arms we drew near to each other, myself and he, not the shade of Marcasse, but the venerable person himself, in flesh and blood, of the hidalgo mole-catcher.

Petrified with astonishment when I saw what I had taken for a ghost slowly carry his hand to the corner of his hat and raise it without bending the fraction of an inch, I started back a yard or two; and this movement, which Arthur thought was a joke on my part, only increased his merriment. The weasel-hunter was by no means disconcerted; perhaps in his judicial gravity he was thinking that this was the usual way to greet people on the other side of the ocean.

But Arthur's laughter almost proved infectious when Marcasse said to me with incomparable gravity:

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"Monsieur Bernard, I have had the honor of searching for you for a long time."

"For a long time, in truth, my good Marcasse," I replied, as I shook my old friend's hand with delight. "But, tell me by what strange power I have been lucky enough to draw you hither. In the old days you passed for a sorcerer; is it possible that I have become one, too, without knowing it?"

"I will explain all that, my dear general," answered Marcasse, who was apparently dazzled by my captain's uniform. "If you will allow me to accompany you I will tell you many things—many things!"

On hearing Marcasse repeat his words in a low voice, as if furnishing an echo for himself, a habit which only a minute before I was in the act of imitating, Arthur burst out laughing again. Marcasse turned toward him and after surveying him intently bowed with imperturbable gravity. Arthur, suddenly recovering his serious mood, rose and, with comic dignity, bowed in return almost to the ground.

We returned to the camp together. On the way Marcasse told me his story in that brief style of his, which as it forced his hearer to ask a thousand wearisome questions, far from simplifying his narrative, made it extraordinarily complicated. It afforded Arthur great amusement; but as you would not derive the same pleasure from listening to an exact reproduction of this interminable dialogue, I will limit myself to telling you how

Marcasse had come to leave his country and his friends, in order to give the American cause the help of his sword.

M. de la Marche happened to be setting out for America at the very time when Marcasse came to his castle in Berry for a week, to make his annual round among the beams and joists in the barns. The inmates of the château, in their excitement at the count's departure, indulged in wonderful commentaries on that far country, so full of dangers and marvels, from which, according to the village wiseacres, no man ever returned without a vast fortune, and so many gold and silver ingots that he needed ten ships to carry them all. Now, under his icy exterior, Don Marcasse, like some hyperborean volcano, concealed a glowing imagination, a passionate love of the marvelous. Accustomed to live in a state of equilibrium on narrow beams in evidently loftier regions than other men, and not insensible to the glory of astounding the bystanders every day by the calm daring of his acrobatic movements, he let himself be fired by these pictures of Eldorado; and his dreams were the more extravagant because, as usual, he unbosomed himself to no one. M. d la Marche, therefore, was very much surprised when, on the eve of his departure, Marcasse presented himself, and proposed to accompany him to America as his valet. In vain did M. de la Marche remind him that he was very old to abandon his calling and run the risks of a new kind of life. Marcasse displayed so much firmness

that in the end he gained his point. Various reasons led M. de la Marche to consent to the strange request. He had resolved to take with him a servant older still than the weasel-hunter, a man who was accompanying him only with great reluctance. But this man enjoyed his entire confidence, a favor which M. de la Marche was very slow to grant, since he was only able to keep up the outward show of a man of quality, and wished to be served faithfully, and with economy and prudence. He knew, however, that Marcasse was scrupulously honest, and even singularly unselfish; for there was something of Don Quixote in the man's soul as well as in his appearance. He had found in some ruins a sort of treasure trove, that is to say, an earthenware jar containing a sum of about ten thousand francs in old gold and silver coins; and not only had he handed it over to the owner of the ruins, whom he might easily have deceived, but further he had refused to accept any reward, declaring emphatically in his abbreviated jargon, "honesty would die selling itself."

Marcasse's economy, his discretion, his punctuality, seemed likely to make him a valuable man if he could be trained to put these qualities at the service of others. The one thing to be feared was that he might not be able to accustom himself to his loss of independence. However, M. de la Marche thought that, before M. De Ternay's squadron sailed, he would have time to test his new squire sufficiently.

GEORGE SAND

On his side, Marcasse felt many regrets at taking leave of his friends and home; for if he had "friends everywhere and everywhere a native place," as he said, in allusion to his wandering life, he still had a very marked preference for Varenne; and of all his castles (for he was accustomed to call every place he stopped at "his"), the château of Sainte-Sévère was the only one which he arrived at with pleasure and left with regret. One day, when he had missed his footing on the roof and had rather a serious fall, Edmée, then still a child, had won his heart by the tears she had shed over this accident, and the artless attentions she had shown him. And ever since Patience had come to dwell on the edge of the park, Marcasse had felt still more attracted toward Sainte-Sévère; for in Patience Marcasse had found his Orestes. Marcasse did not always understand Patience; but Patience was the only man who thoroughly understood Marcasse, and who knew how much chivalrous honesty and noble courage lay hidden beneath that odd exterior. Humbly bowing to the hermit's intellectual superiority, the weasel-hunter would stop respectfully whenever the poetic frenzy took possession of Patience and made his words unintelligible. At such a time Marcasse would refrain from questions and ill-timed remarks with touching gentleness; would lower his eyes, and nodding his head from time to time as if he understood and approved, would, at least, afford his friend the innocent pleasure of being listened to without contradiction.

Marcasse, however, had understood enough to make him embrace republican ideas and share in those romantic hopes of universal leveling and a return to the golden age, which had been so ardently fostered by old Patience. Having frequently heard his friend say that these doctrines were to be cultivated with prudence (precept, however, to which Patience gave but little heed himself), the hidalgo, inclined to reticence both by habit and inclination, never spoke of his philosophy; but he proved himself a more efficacious propagandist by carrying about from castle to cottage, and from house to farm, those little cheap editions of *La Science du Bonhomme Richard,* and other small treatises on popular patriotism, which, according to the Jesuits, a secret society of Coltairian philosophers, devoted to the diabolical practice of freemasonry, circulated gratis among the lower classes.

Thus in Marcasse's sudden resolution there was as much revolutionary enthusiasm as love of adventure. For a long time the dormouse and polecat had seemed to him overfeeble enemies for his restless valor, even as the granary floor seemed to afford too narrow a field. Every day he read the papers of the previous day in the servants' hall of the houses he visited; and it appeared to him that this war in America, which was hailed as the awakening of the spirit of justice and liberty in the New World, ought to produce a revolution in France. It is true he had a very literal notion of the way in which ideas were to

cross the seas and take possession of the minds of our continent. In his dreams he used to see an army of victorious Americans disembarking from numberless ships, and bringing the olive branch of peace and the horn of plenty to the French nation. In these same dreams he beheld himself at the head of a legion of heroes returning to Varenne as a warrior, a legislator, a rival of Washington, suppressing abuses, cutting down enormous fortunes, assigning to each proletarian a suitable share, and in the midst of his far-reaching and vigorous measures, protecting the good and fair-dealing nobles, and assuring an honorable existence to them. Needless to say, the distress inseparable from all great political crises never entered into Marcasse's mind, and not a single drop of blood sullied the romantic picture which Patience had unrolled before his eyes.

From these sublime hopes to the rôle of valet to M. de la Marche was a far cry; but Marcasse would reach his goal by no other way. The ranks of the army corps destined for America had long been filled and it was only in the character of a passenger attached to the expedition that he could take his place on one of the merchant ships that followed the expedition. He had questioned the abbé on these points without revealing his plans. His departure quite staggered all the inhabitants of Varenne.

No sooner had he set foot on the shores of the States than he felt an irresistible inclination to take his big hat and his big sword and go off

all alone through the woods, as he had been accustomed to do in his own country. His conscience, however, prevented him from quitting his master after having pledged himself to serve him. He had calculated that fortune would help him, and fortune did. The war proved much more bloody and vigorous than had been expected, and M. de la Marche feared, though wrongly, that he might be impeded by the poor health of his gaunt squire. Having a suspicion, too, of the man's desire for liberty, he offered him a sum of money and some letter of recommendation, to enable him to join the American troops as a volunteer. Marcasse, knowing the state of his master's fortune, refused the money, and only accepted the letters; and then set off with as light a step as the nimblest weasels that he had ever killed.

His intention was to make for Philadelphia; but, through a chance occurrence which I need not relate, he learnt that I was in the South, and, rightly calculating that he would obtain both advice and help from me, he had set out to find me, alone, on foot, through unknown countries almost uninhabited and often full of danger of all kinds. His clothes alone had suffered; his yellow face had not changed its tint, and he was no more surprised at his latest exploit than if he had merely covered the distance from Saint-Sévère to Gazeau Tower.

The only fresh habit that I noticed in him, was that he would turn round from time to time, and look behind him, as if he had felt inclined to call some one; then immediately after he would smile

and sigh almost at the same instant. I could not resist a desire to ask him the cause of his uneasiness.

"Alas!" he replied, "habit can't get rid of; a poor dog! good dog! Always saying, 'Here, Blaireau! Blaireau, here!'"

"I understand," I said, "Blaireau is dead, and you cannot accustom yourself to the idea that you will never see him at your heels again."

"Dead!" he exclaimed, with an expression of horror. "No, thank God! Friend Patience, great friend! Blaireau quite well off, but sad like his master; his master alone!"

"If Blaireau is with Patience," said Arthur, "he is well off, as you say; for Patience wants nothing. Patience will love him because he loves his master, and you are certain to see your good friend and faithful dog again."

Marcasse turned his eyes upon the individual who seemed to be so well acquainted with his life; but, feeling sure that he had never seen him before, he acted as he was wont to do when he did not understand; he raised his hat and bowed respectfully.

On my immediate recommendation Marcasse was enrolled in my company and, a little while afterward, was made a sergeant. The worthy man went through the whole campaign with me, and went through it bravely; and in 1782, when I joined Rochambeau's army to fight under the French flag, he followed me, as he was anxious to share my lot until the end. In the early days I

looked upon him rather as an amusement than a companion; but his excellent conduct and calm fearlessness soon won for him the esteem of all, and I had reason to be proud of my *protégé*. Arthur also conceived a great friendship for him; and, when off duty, he accompanied us in all our walks, carrying the naturalist's box and running the snakes through with his sword.

But when I tried to make him speak of my cousin, he by no means satisfied me. Whether he did not understand how eager I felt to learn all the details of the life she was leading far away from me, or whether in this matter he was obeying one of those inviolable laws which governed his conscience, I could never obtain from him any clear solution of the doubts which harassed me. Quite early he told me that there was no question of her marriage with any one; but, accustomed though I was to his vague manner of expressing himself, I imagined he seemed embarrassed in making his assertion and had the air of a man who had sworn to keep a secret. Honor forbade me to insist to such an extent as to let him see my hopes, and so there always remained between us a painful point which I tried to avoid touching upon, but to which, in spite of myself, I was continually returning. As long as Arthur was near me, I retained my reason, and interpreted Edmée's letters in the most loyal way; but when I was unfortunate enough to be separated from him, my sufferings revived, and my stay in America became more irksome to me every day.

Our separation took place when I left the American army to fight under the command of the French general. Arthur was an American; and, moreover, he was only waiting for the end of the war to retire from the service, and settle in Boston with Doctor Cooper, who loved him as his son, and who had undertaken to get him appointed principal librarian to the library of the Philadelphia Society. This was all the reward that Arthur desired for his labors.

The events which filled my last years in America belong to history. It was with a truly personal delight that I hailed the peace which proclaimed the United States a free nation. I had begun to chafe at my long absence from France; my passion had been growing ever greater, and left no room for the intoxication of military glory. Before my departure I went to take leave of Arthur. Then I sailed with the worthy Marcasse, divided between sorrow at parting from my only friend, and joy at the prospect of once more seeing my only love. The squadron to which my ship belonged experienced many vicissitudes during the passage, and several times I gave up all hope of ever kneeling before Edmée under the great oaks of Sainte-Sévère. At last, after a final storm off the coast of France, I set foot on the shores of Brittany, and fell into the arms of my poor sergeant, who had borne our common misfortunes, if not with greater physical courage, at least with a calmer spirit, and we mingled our tears.

GEORGE SAND.

DECEMBER 3

ANOTHER TEMPLE GONE*

I

THEY say that there may be a speck of quiet lodged at the central point of a cyclone. Round it everything goes whirling. It alone sits at its ease, as still as the end of an axle that lets the wheel, all about it, whirl any wild way it likes.

That was the way at Gartumna in those distant years whan the "land war" was blowing great guns all over the rest of the County Clare. Gartumna lay just at the midst of that tempest. But not a leaf stirred in the place. You paid your rent if you could; for the coat that the old colonel had on his back—and he never out of the township—was that worn you'd be sorry. Suppose you hadn't the cash, still you were not "put out of it." All that you'd have to suffer was that good man buzzing about your holding, wanting to help; he would be all in a fidget trying to call to mind the way that some heathen Dane, that he had known when a boy, used to bedevil salt butter back into fresh—that, or how Montenegrins would fatten a pig on any wisp of old trash that would come blowing

From "Fiery Particles," by permission of the author.

down the high road. A kind man, though he never got quit of the queer dream he had that he knew how to farm.

Another practising Christian we had was Father O'Reilly. None of the sort that would charge you half the girl's fortune before they'd let the young people set foot in the church. And, when it was done, he'd come to the party and sing the best songs of any one there. However, at practical goodness Tom Farrell left the entire field at the post. Tom had good means: a farm in fee-simple —the land, he would often tell us, the finest in Ireland, "every pitaty the weight of the world if you'd take it up in your hand"; turf coming all but in at the door to be cut; besides, the full of a creel of fish in no more than the time you'd take dropping a fly on the stream: the keeper had married Tom's sister. People would say "Ach, the match Tom would be for a girl!" and gossips liked counting the "terrible sum" that he might leave when he'd die if only he knew how to set any sort of value on money. But this he did not. The widow Burke, who knew more about life than a body might think, said Tom would never be high in the world because no one could come and ask for a thing but he'd give it them. Then, as she warmed to the grateful labour of letting you know what was what, the widow might add: "I question will Tom ever make a threepenny piece, or a penny itself, out of that old construction he has away there in the bog."

At these words a hearer would give a slight start

and glance cannily round, knowing that it would be no sort of manners to give a decent body like Sergeant Maguire the botheration and torment of hearing the like of that said out aloud. But the sergeant would never be there. For he, too, had his fine social instincts. He would be half a mile off, intent on his duty, commanding the two decent lads that were smoking their pipes, one on each of his flanks, in the tin police hut away down the road. Gartumna did not doubt that this tactful officer knew more than he ever let on. A man of his parts must surely have seen, if not smelt that no unclean or common whisky, out of a shop, had emitted the mellow sunshine transfiguring recent christenings and wakes. But who so coarse as to bring a functionary so right-minded up against the brute choice between falling openly short in professional zeal and wounding the gentle bosom of Gartumna's peace?

And yet the widow's sonorous soprano, or somebody else's, may have been raised once too often on this precarious theme. For, on one of the warmest June mornings that ever came out of the sky, Sergeant Maguire paraded his whole army of two, in line, on a front of one mile, with himself as centre file and file of direction, and marched out in this extremely open order into the fawn-coloured wilderness of the bog. "You'll understand, the two of yous," he had said to his right flank, Constable Boam, and to Constable Duffy, his left, "that this is a sweeping or dhragging movement that we're making."

The sun was high already—your feverish early starts were no craze of the sergeant's. The air over the bog had tuned up for the day to its loudest and most multitudinous hum and hot click of grasshoppers and bees; all the fawn surface swam in a water-coloured quiver of glare; the coarse, juiceless grass and old roots, leathery and slippery, tripped up the three beaters' feet. Hour by hour the long morning greased and begrimed the three clean-shaven good-soldier faces that had set out on the quest; noon came blazingly on—its savage vertical pressure seemed to quell and mute with an excess of heat the tropical buzz of all the basking bog life that the morning's sunshine had inspirited; another hour and the bog was swooning, as old poets say, under the embraces of the sun, her friend, when a thin column of more intensely quivering air, a hundred yards off to the sergeant's half-left, betrayed some source of an ardour still more fiery than the sun's. Just for the next five or ten minutes, no more, the sergeant had some good stalking. Then it was all over. The hunting was done: nothing left but to whistle in his flank men and go over the haul.

The tub and worm of the illicit still had not been really hidden; they were just formally screened with a few blocks of turf as though in silent appeal to the delicacy of mankind to accept as adequate this symbolic tribute to the convention of a seemly reticence. Farrell, a little, neatly made, fine-featured man with a set, contained face, but with all the nervousness of him quivering out into the

restless tips of his small, pointed fingers, gazed at the three stolid uniformed bulks so much grosser than he, while they disrobed his beloved machinery of that decent light vesture of turf and rummaged with large, coarse hands among the mysteries of his craft. He wore the Quakerish black suit and the broad and low-crowned soft black hat in which a respectable farmer makes his soul on a Sunday morning. Silent, and seemingly not shamed, nor yet enraged, neither the misdemeanant caught in the act nor the parent incensed by a menace to its one child, he looked on, grave and almost compassionate. So might the high priestess of Vesta have looked when the Gaulish heathen came butting into the shrine and messed about with the poker and tongs of the goddess's eternal flame. How could the poor benighted wretches know the mischief that they might be doing the world?

Sergeant Maguire, too, may have had his own sense of our kind's tragic blindness quickened just then—that a man, a poor passionate man, should so rush upon his own undoing! "Ach, it's a pity of you, Farrell," he presently said. "A pity! You with the grand means that you have of your own! An' you distillin' pocheen!"

"Pocheen!" The little, precise, nervous voice of Farrell ran up into a treble of melancholy scorn. With an austere quality in his movements he drew a brown stoneware jar from among some heaped cubes of turf that the barbarians had not yet disarranged. From another recess he took a squat

tumbler. Into this he poured from the jar enough to fill a liqueur-glass rather smaller than most. "Tell me," he bade almost sternly, holding the tumbler out to Maguire, "d'ye call that pocheen?"

"Ye can take a sup first," was the canny reply. Maguire had heard how Eastern kings always made cooks and premiers taste first.

Farrell absorbed the tot, drop by drop. He did not cross himself first, but there was something about his way of addressing himself to the draught that would make you think of a man crossing himself before some devout exercise, or taking the shoes from off his feet before stepping on holy ground. As the potion irrigated his soul he seemed to draw off from the touch of this clamorous world into some cloistral retreat. From these contemplative shades he emerged, controlling a sigh, a little time after the last drop had done its good office. He poured out for Maguire.

"Well, here's luck," said the sergeant, raising the glass, "and a light sentence beyond." The good fellow's tone conveyed what the etiquette of the service would not allow him to say—that in the day of judgment every mitigating circumstance would be freshly remembered.

Up to this his fortieth year Maguire, conversing with the baser liquors of this world and not with philtres of transfiguration, had counted it sin to drink his whisky as if it would burn him. So the whole of the tot was now about to descend his large-bore throat in close order, as charges of shot proceed through the barrel of a gun. But the

needful peristaltic action of the gullet had scarcely commenced when certain tidings of great joy were taken in at the palate and forwarded express to an astonished brain. "Mother of God!" the sergeant exclaimed. "What sort of hivven's delight is this you've invented for all souls in glory?"

A sombre satisfaction gleamed out of Farrell's monkish face. Truth was coming into its own, if only too late. The heathen were seeing the light. "It's the stuff," he said, gravely, "that made the old gods of the Greeks and Romans feel sure they were gods."

"Be cripes, they were right," asseverated Maguire. He was imbibing drop by drop now, as the wise poets of all times have done, and not as the topers, the swillers of cocktails, punch and cup, and the like, things only fit to fill up the beasts that perish. Not hoggishness only, but infinite loss would it have seemed to let any one drop go about its good work as a mere jostled atom, lost in a mob of others. If ever the bounty of heaven should raise a bumper crop of Garricks on earth, you would not use them as so many supers, would you?

Farrell, after a short pause to collect his thoughts, was stating another instalment of the facts. "There's a soul and a body," he said, "to everything else, the same as ourselves. Any malt you'll have drunk, to this day, was the body of whisky only—the match of these old lumps of flesh that we're all of us draggin' about till we die.

The soul of the stuff's what you've got in your hand."

"It is that," said the sergeant, and chewed the last drop like a lozenge. He now perceived that the use of large, bold, noble figures of speech, like this of Farrell's, was really the only way to express the wonderful thoughts filling up a man's mind when he is at his best. That was the characteristic virtue of Farrell's handiwork. Its merely material parts were, it is true, pleasant enough. They seemed, while you sipped, to be honey, warm sunshine embedded in amber and topaz, the animating essence of lustrous brown velvet, and some solution of all the mellowest varnish that ever ripened for eye or ear the glow of Dutch landscape or Cremona fiddle. No sooner, however, did this potable sum of all the higher physical embodiments of geniality and ardour enter your frame than a major miracle happened in the domain of the spirit: you suddenly saw that the most freely soaring poetry, all wild graces and quick turns and abrupt calls on your wits, was just the most exact, business-like way of treating the urgent practical concerns of mankind.

So the sergeant's receivers were well tuned to take in great truths when Farrell, first measuring out the due dram for Constable Duffy, resumed. "You'll remember the priest that died on us last year?"

"I do that, rest his soul," said each of the other two Catholics. Constable Boam was only a lad

out of London, jumped by some favour into the force. But a good lad.

"Ye'll remember," Farrell continued, "the state he was in, at the end? Perished with thinness, and he filled with the spirit of God the way you'd see the soul of him shining out through the little worn webbin' of flesh he had on, the match for a flame that's in one of the Chinese lanterns you'd see made of paper. Using up the whole of his body, that's what the soul of him was—convertin' the flesh of it bit by bit into soul till hardly a tittle of body was left to put in the ground. You could lift the whole with a finger."

"Now, aren't ye the gifted man?" The words seemed to break, of themselves, out of Constable Duffy. Rapt with the view of entire new worlds of thought, and the feel of new powers for tackling them, Duffy gazed open-lipped and wide-eyed at Farrell the giver.

Farrell's face acknowledged, with no touch of wicked pride, this homage to truth. "*Nob nobis, Domine.*" Austere, sacerdotal, Farrell inspected the second enraptured proselyte. Then he went on, his eyes well fixed on some object or other far out on the great bog's murmurous waste—the wilfully self-mesmerizing stare of the mystic far gone. "The body's the real old curse. Not a thing in the world but it's kept out of being the grand thing it's got the means in it to be if it hadn't a hunk of a body always holding it back. You can't even have all the good there is in a song without some old blether of words would go wrong on

your tongue as likely as not. And in Ireland the glory an' wonder that's sent by the will of God to gladden the heart of a man has never got shut till this day of sour old mashes of barley and malt and God alone knows what sort of dish-washin's fit to make a cow vomit, or poisons would blister half of the lining off the inside of an ass."

Constable Duffy was no man of words. But just at this moment he gained his first distinct view of philosophy's fundamental distinction between matter and form; the prospect so ravished his whole being that as he handed in the drained tumbler to Farrell he murmured in a kind of pensive ecstasy, "Hurroosh to your soul!" and for a long time afterward was utterly lost in the joys of contemplation.

Constable Boam's reversionary interest in paradise had now matured. While Farrell ministered to Boam, the grapes of the new wine of thought began abruptly to stammer through the lips of the sergeant. "Aye! Every man has a pack of old trash discommodin' his soul. Pitaties and meal and the like—worked up into flesh on the man. An' the whole of it made of the dirt in the fields, a month or two back! The way it's a full barrow-load of the land will be walking on every two legs that you'd see shankin' past! It's what he's come out of. And what he goes back into being. Aye, and what he can't do without having, as long as he lasts. An' yet it's not he. An' yet he must keep a fast hold on it always, or else he'll be dead. An' yet I'll engage he'll have to be fight-

ing it always—it and the sloth it would put on the grand venomous life he has in him. God help us, it's difficult." Along the mazy path that has ever followed in the wake of Socrates the sergeant's mind slowly tottered, clinging at each turn to some reminiscence of Farrell's golden words, as a child makes its first adventurous journey on foot across the wide nursery floor, working from chair to chair for occasional support.

"Sorra a scrap of difficulty about it," Farrell assured him, "once you've got it firm set in your mind that it's all an everlastin' turnin' of body into soul that's required. All of a man's body that's nothing at all but body is nothing but divvil. The job is to cut a good share of it right out of you, clever and clean, an' then to inspirit the whole of the bit you have left with all the will and force of your soul till it's soul itself that the whole has become, or the next thing to the whole, the way the persons that lay you out after you die and the soul has quitted would wonder to see the weeny scrap that was left for anybody to wake. You could take anything that there is in the world and go on scourin' and scourin' away at the dross it has about it and so releasin' the workin's of good till you'd have the thing that was nine parts body and one part soul at the start changed to the other way round, aye, and more. By the grace of God that's the work I've been at in this place. Halfway am I now, as you can see for yourselves, to transformin' the body of anny slushy old drink you'd get in a town into the soul of all kindness an'

joy that our blessed Lord put into the water the good people had at the wedding. Nothin' at all to do but walk straight on, the way I was going, to work the stuff up to the pitch that you'd not feel it wettin' your throat, but only the love of God and of man an' the true wisdom of life, and comprehension of this and of that, flowin' softly into your mind. Divvil a thing stood in me way, save only"—here the mild-hearted fanatic stooped for a moment from the heights where his spirit abode to note with a wan smile of indulgence a little infirmity of mankind's—"a few of the boys do be lying around in the bog, the way they have me worn with the fear they'd lap the stuff hot out of the tub and be killed if I'd turn me back for one instiant."

"They'll quit, from this out," the sergeant said, with immense decision. "I'll not have anny mischievous trash of the sort molestin' a man at his work."

"Ow, it's a wonderful country!" Constable Boam breathed to himself. The words had been rising to Boam's Cockney lips at almost every turn of affairs since his landfall at Kingstown. Now they came soft and low, soft and low. A peace passing all understanding had just invaded the wondering Englishman's mind.

II

Let not the English be tempted to think that by no other race can a law be dodged for a long time without scandal. Neither the sergeant nor

either man of his force was ever a shade the worse for liquor that summer. To Tom's priestly passion for purging more and yet more of the baser alloys out of the true cult there responded a lofty impulse, among the faithful, to keep undeflowered by any beastlike excess the magical garden of which he had given them the key.

For it was none of your common tavern practice to look in at Tom's when the loud afternoon hum of the bees was declining resposefully toward the cool velvety playtime of bats and fat moths. All that plays and the opera, lift of romance and the high, vibrant pitch of great verse are to you lucky persons of culture; travel, adventure, the throwing wide open of sudden new windows for pent minds to stare out, the brave stir of mystical gifts in the heart, gleams of enchanting light cast on places unthought of, annunciatory visits of that exalting sense of approach to some fiery core of all life, watch-tower and power-house both, whence he who attains might see all manner of things run radiantly clear in their courses and passionately right. The police did not offer this account of their spiritual sensations at Tom's, any more than the rest of Gartumna did. But all this, or a vision of this, was for mankind to enjoy as it took its ease on the crumbling heaps of dry turf by the still, what time the inquisitive owls were just beginning to float in soundless circles overhead. From some dull and chilly outer rim of existence each little group of Tom's friends would draw in together toward a glowing focus at which

the nagging "No," "No," "No," of life's common hardness was sure to give place to the benedictive "Yes," "Yes," "O yes" of a benignly penetrative understanding of earth, heaven, and everything else. Who such a beast as to attempt to debauch the delicate fairy conducting these mysteries? Too good to imperil, they seemed, besides too wonderful to end. Dust, all the same, hath dimmed Helen's eyes, which seemed to so many people as if there light could not go out.

All revolutions, some pundits say, are, at bottom, affairs of finance. And Mrs. Burke had diagnosed truly. Tom bore within him the germ of that mortal illness of giving away all before him. His reign in all hearts at Gartumna resembled that of the Roi Soleil over France, both in the measureless glory of its meridian and in the fundamental insolvency of its afternoon. He had always given the work of his hands, to the worthy, free and without price. The fitness to receive was all; something sacramental about the consumption of his latest masterpiece by small, close-drawn parties of beautiful souls made the passing of coin at such seasons abhorrent to Tom. "Would you have me keep a shebeen?" he had indignantly asked, when the sergeant made a stout, shamefaced effort to pay. So from day to day they kept up an urbane routine, month after month. Tom would always proffer the squat glass with a shy, tentative gesture; this made it clear that in the sight of God, so to speak, no such freedom had ever been taken, or thought of, before. The

sergeant would always accept in the jocose, casual tone of a martinet making one playful and really quite absurd exception to his rules, the case being one which, anyhow, cannot recur, so that there need be no uneasiness about setting up a precedent now. But all summers end, and urbanity butters no parsnips.

The brownness of later August was deepening round Tom's place of research before he saw that the thing couldn't go on as it was. He suddenly saw it, about ten o'clock one morning. That evening, when the day's tide of civilian beneficiaries had tactfully receded from the still, and the police, their normal successors, had laid rifle and helmet aside, Tom held up his dreadful secret from minute to minute while the gray moth of twilight darkened on into brown moth-coloured night. He tried to begin telling, but found he couldn't trust both his voice and his face at the same time. As soon as his face could no longer be clearly seen he worked up a prodigious assumption of calm and said to the three monumental silhouettes planted black on their three plinths of turf, "I'm ruined! Apt you'll be to find me quit out of the place if you come back in two days or three."

The sergeant leapt off his plinth, levered up by the shock. "God help us!" he said. "What wild trash are you just after gabbing?"

"Me fortune's destroyed," Tom pursued. His face had crumpled up with distress as soon as he began; but the kind darkness hid that: his voice

was in fairly good preservation. "I borrowed the full of the worth of me holding to get——" and no doubt he was going on, "get along with the work I'm at here," but felt, perhaps, that this would not be quite the thing, considering. So he broke off and said only, "The back of me hand to the Jew mortgagee that's foreclosin'."

"God help us!" again said the sergeant. "And we drinking the creature out of house and home a good while back! Men——" He abruptly stiffened all the muscles of Duffy and Boam with the cogent parade voice that braces standing-easy into standing-at-ease. Then he thought for a moment. O, there was plenty to think of. Tom, the decent body, put out of his farm by the sheriff. Police aid, no doubt, requisitioned. The whole district, perhaps, in a hullabaloo, like all those around it. The Garden of Eden going straight back to prairie. He must be firm. "Men," he resumed, "are we standin' by to see a man ruined that's done the right thing by ourselves? I'll engage it's a mod'rate share only of cash he'll require to get on in peace with his work. An' the three of us unmarried men, with full pay and allowances!"

The heart of the ancient and good-natured people of England aligned itself instantly with the chivalrous spirit of the Gael. "Thet's right, sawgeant," said Constable Boam.

Constable Duffy's range of expression had not the width to cover fully the whole diversity of life. He ejaculated, "Hurroosh to your souls! Five shillin's a week."

"Sime 'ere," subjoined Boam.

"Mine's ten," said Maguire, "I've got me rank to remember."

So swiftly and smoothly may any man's business pass, with seeming success, into a small limited company. Farrell, the innocent Farrell, took heart afresh and toiled on at the disengagement of Bacchus, the actual godhead, from out his too, too solid coatings of flesh. The force stilled the first wild fears of its heart and felt it was getting good value for its money—a quiet beat for the body, and for the soul an ever-open line of communication with the Infinite. Through all Gartumna a warning shudder had run at the first crisis. Now the world seemed safe again; the civilian lamb lay down once more beside the three large lions of the law, dreaming it to be enough that these were no man-eaters. Children all, chasing a butterfly farther and farther into the wilds, under a blackening sky. While they chased, the good old Resident Magistrate, Ponting, was dying of some sudden internal queerness he had, he that had never done harm to a soul if looking the other way could prevent it. And into Old Ponto's seat was climbing a raging dragon of what a blind world calls efficiency.

Major Coburn came, in fact, of that redoubtable breed of super-dragons, the virtuous, masterful, hundred-eyed cavalry sergeants who carve their way to commissions somewhat late in their careers. Precise as some old maids of exemplary life, as fully posted up in the tricks of the crowd that they

have left as a schoolboy turned by magic into a master, they burn with a fierce clear flame of desire to make up the enjoyable arrears of discipline that they might, under luckier stars, have exercised in their youth. Being the thing that he was, how could the man Coburn fail to do harm, with all the harm that there was crying out to be done?

He sent for Sergeant Maguire. Quin, the district inspector—quite enough of an Argus himself without extra prompting—was there when the sergeant marched into the major's room. To outward view at this moment Maguire was fashioned out of first-rate wood. Within, he was but a tingling system of apprehensions. First, with gimlet eyes the two superiors perforated his outer timbers in numerous places, gravely demoralizing the nerve centres within. When these exploratory borings had gone pretty far the crimelessness of Gartumna was touched upon—in a spirit of coarse curiosity far, far from felicitation.

Maguire faintly propounded the notion that keeping the law was just a hobby rife among the wayward natives. "They're queer bodies," he said in conclusion.

No fantasy like that could be expected to weigh with a new broom possessed with its first fine passion for sweeping. "Don't tell *me*," the major snapped. His voice vibrated abominably with menace. "You know as well as I do, sergeant, the sort of a squadron it is where a man's never crimed." He paused, to let this baleful thrust tell its tale in the agonized sergeant's vitals. Then he

went on, "And you know what it means," and again he paused and the four gimlet eyes resumed their kindly task of puncturing him at assorted points.

To Maguire's previous distresses was now added the choice mortification which always attends the discovery that you have been firing off an abstract and friarly morality at heavily armour-plated men of the world. With no loss of penetrative power, the major continued, "Screening—that's what it means. Sergeants who need the stripes taken off them—that's what it means. Go back to your duty and see to it."

Sergeant Maguire withdrew.

"He'd not comprehend. He'd not comprehend," the sergeant despairfully told himself, over and over again, as he legged back the four miles to Gartumna under the early falling September dew. If only the darkened mind of Major Coburn *could* gain understanding! Anybody on earth, you might think, if he had any wit at all to know good from bad, must see that this was a case in a thousand—that here, if ever in man's history, the spirit which giveth life was being borne down by the letter that killeth. But that body Coburn——! Maguire had been a soldier: he knew those middle-aged rankers. "Shut-headed cattle!" he groaned to himself. "No doin' annything with them." The dew was quite heavy. Sundown, autumn, and all that was best in the world going the way of honeysuckle and rose. Before he reached the tin hut one of the longest in human use among mel-

ancholy's standard dyes had suffused pretty deeply the tissues of the sergeant's mind.

It seemed next morning as if that summer's glowing pomp of lustrous months were taking its leave with a grand gesture of self-revival on the eve of extinction, as famous actors will bend up every nerve in order to be most greatly their old selves on the night of farewell. Mid-summer heat was burning again, and the quicksilvery haze shimmered over the bog when Maguire went out alone to see Farrell, just as the sergeant remembered it on the day when the scorched air from the furnace first showed him the still. Farrell, a little leaner now, a little less natty in his clothes, a little more absent-eyed with the intensity of a single absorption, raised from his work the patiently welcoming face of genius called away by affairs of this world from its heavenly traffic with miracles.

"All destroyed, Tom," the sergeant said quickly. The longer he waited to bash in the unsuspecting upturned face of Farrell's child-like happiness the more impracticable would it have grown. "The glory," he added by way of detail, "is departed entirely."

Farrell stared. He did not yet take it in well enough to be broken.

"It's this devastatin' divvil," the sergeant went on, "that they've sent us in lieu of Old Ponto—God rest his kind soul!"

Farrell did not seem to have even heard of that sinister accession. They say there were Paris

fiddlers who fiddled right through the French Revolution and did not hear about the Bastille or the Terror. Live with the gods and deal with the Absolute Good, and Amurath's succession to Amurath may not excite you.

"God help the man—can't he see he's destroyed?" Fretful and raw from a night of wakeful distress, the sergeant spoke almost crossly, although it was for Tom that he felt most sorely in all that overshadowed world.

The worker in the deep mine whence perfection is hewn peered, as it were, half-abstractedly up the shaft. Not otherwise might some world-leading thinker in Moscow have looked partly up from his desk to hear, with semi-interested ears, that a Bolshevik mob was burning the house.

The disorganized sergeant veered abruptly all the way round from pettishness to compunction. "Dear knows," he said, "that it's sorry I am for ye, Tom." He collected himself to give particulars of the catastrophe. "A hustlin' kind of a body," he ended, "et up with zeal till he'd turn the grand world that we have into a parcel of old rags and bones and scrap iron before you could hold him at all. An' what divvil's work would he have me be at, for a start, but clap somebody into the jug, good, bad, or indifferent? *Now* do ye see? There isn't a soul in the place but yourself that does the least taste of a thing that anny court in the wide world could convict for. What with you and the old priest and the new, and the old colonel below, you've made the whole of the people a very

fair match for the innocent saints of God. An' this flea of a creature you couldn't even trust to be quiet an' not stravadin' out over the bog by himself like a spy, the way he'd soon have the whole set of us suppin' tribulation with a spoon of sorrow."

Farrell subsided on one of the seat-like piles of sunned peat. The fearful truth had begun to sink in. He sat for a while silent, tasting the bitter cup.

The heat that day was a wonder. Has any one reading this ever been in the Crown Court at Assizes when three o'clock on a torrid dog-day comes in the dead vast and middle of some commonplace murder case, of poignant interest to no one except the accused? Like breeze and bird and flower in song, judge and usher, counsel and witness, all the unimperilled parties alike "confess the hour." Questions are slowly thought of by the Bar and languidly put; the lifeless answers are listlessly heard; motes of dust lazily stirring in shafts of glare thrown from side windows help to drowse you as though they were poppy seeds to inhale; all eyes, except one pair, are beginning to glaze; the whole majestic machine of justice seems to flag and slow down as if it might soon subside into utter siesta, just where it is, like a sun-dragged Neapolitan pavior asleep on his unfinished pavement. Only the shabby party penned in the dock is proof against all the pharmacopœia of opiates. Ceaselessly shifting his feet, resettling his neckcloth, hunting from each sleepy face to the next for some gleam of hope for himself, he would show,

were any one there not too deeply lulled to observe, how far the proper quality and quantity of torment is capable of resisting the action of nature's own anodynes.

Out in the bog a rude likeness of that vigil of pain, set amidst the creeping peace of the lotus, was now being staged. Under the rising heat of that tropical day the whole murmurous pulse of the bog, its flies and old bees, all its audible infestation with life seemed to be sinking right down into torpor while Sergeant Maguire's woebegone narrative dribbled off into silence and Tom came to the last of his hopeless questions. Questions? No; mere ineffectual sniffings among the bars of the closed cage of their fate. They both lay back on the warm turf, some ten feet apart, Tom staring up blankly straight into the unpitying blue while the sergeant stuck it out numbly within the darkened dome of his helmet, held over his face, striving within the rosy gloom of that tabernacle to gather up all his strength for the terrible plunge.

The plunge had to come. The sergeant rose on one elbow. He marshalled his voice. "There's the one way of it, Tom," he got out at last. "Will you quit out of this and away to the States before I lose all me power to keep a hand off you?"

Farrell partly rose, too. His mind had not yet journeyed so far as the sergeant's along the hard road.

"I'll make up the fare from me savings," the sergeant said humbly.

Farrell turned upon him a void, desolate face.

The sergeant hurried on: "The three of us down below will clear up when you're gone. An' we'll sling the still for you into the bog-hole. Aye, be sections, will we. An' everything."

Farrell seemed to be eyeing at every part of its bald surface the dead wall of necessity. That scrutiny ended, he quietly said, "Me heart's broke," and lay back again flat on the peat. So did the sergeant. Nothing stirred for awhile except the agonized quiver and quake of the burnt air over the homely drain-pipe chimney of Tom's moribund furnace.

III

The sergeant wangled a day's leave of absence to go down to Queenstown the day Farrell sailed for New York. Farrell, absently waving a hand from some crowded lower deck of the departing ship, was a figure of high tragic value. Happy the mole astray above ground, or the owl routed out into the sun by bad boys, compared with the perfect specialist cast out upon a bewilderingly general world. The sergeant came away from the quay with his whole spirit laid waste—altruistic provinces and egoistic alike; his very soul sown with salt. He had been near the centre of life all the summer and felt the beat of its heart; now he was somewhere far out on its chill, charmless periphery —"As the earth when leaves are dead." He had not read Shelley. Still, just the same thing.

"I've done me duty," he said in an almost God-cursing tone as the three of them sat in the tin hut

that night, among ashes, and heard the hard perpetual knock of the rain on the roof, "an' I've done down meself."

"Aye, and the whole of us," Constable Duffy lamented, not meaning reproach, but sympathy only; just his part in the common threnody, antiphone answering unto phone.

Constable Boam had a part in it, too: "'Eaven an' 'Ell, 'Eaven an' Ell!"—he almost chanted his dreary conspectus of their vicissitudes. "Ow! a proper mix-up! Gord! it's a wonderful country!"

Nothing more was heard of Farrell. He may have died before he could bring back into use, beside the waters of Babylon, that one talent which 'twas death to hide. Or the talent itself may have died out in his bosom. Abrupt terminations have ere now been put to the infinite; did not Shakespeare dry up, for no visible cause, when he moved back to Stratford? All that we know is that Tom's genius can never have got into its full swing in the States. For, if it had, the States could never have gone to the desperate lengths that they afterward did against the god of his worship.

C. E. MONTAGUE.

DECEMBER 4

A PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF MR. JOHN OAKHURST

HE ALWAYS thought it must have been Fate. Certainly nothing could have been more inconsistent with his habits than to have been in the Plaza at seven o'clock of that midsummer morning. The sight of his colorless face in Sacramento was rare at that season, and indeed at any season, anywhere, publicly, before two o'clock in the afternoon. Looking back upon it after years, in the light of a chanceful life, he determined, with the characteristic philosophy of his profession, that it must have been Fate.

Yet it is my duty, as a strict chronicler of facts, to state that Mr. Oakhurst's presence there that morning was due to a very simple cause. At exactly half-past six, the bank being then a winner to the amount of twenty thousand dollars, he had risen from the faro-table, relinquished his seat to an accomplished assistant, and withdrawn quietly, without attracting a glance from the silent, anxious faces bowed over the table. But when he entered his luxurious sleeping-room, across the passageway, he was a little shocked at finding the sun streaming through an inadvertently opened window. Something in the rare beauty of the

morning, perhaps something in the novelty of the idea, struck him as he was about to close the blinds, and he hesitated. Then, taking his hat from the table, he stepped down a private staircase into the street.

The people who were abroad at that early hour were of a class quite unknown to Mr. Oakhurst. There were milkmen and hucksters delivering their wares, small trades-people opening their shops, housemaids sweeping doorsteps, and occasionally a child. These Mr. Oakhurst regarded with a certain cold curiosity, perhaps quite free from the cynical disfavor with which he generally looked upon the more pretentious of his race whom he was in the habit of meeting. Indeed, I think he was not altogether displeased with the admiring glances which these humble women threw after his handsome face and figure, conspicuous even in a country of fine-looking men. While it is very probable that this wicked vagabond, in the pride of his social isolation, would have been coldly indifferent to the advances of a fine lady, a little girl who ran admiringly by his side in a ragged dress had the power to call a faint flush into his colorless cheek. He dismissed her at last, but not until she had found out—what sooner or later her large-hearted and discriminating sex inevitably did—that he was exceedingly free and open handed with his money, and also—what perhaps none other of her sex ever did—that the bold black eyes of this fine gentleman were in reality of a brownish and even tender gray.

There was a small garden before a white cottage

in a side-street that attracted Mr. Oakhurst's attention. It was filled with roses, heliotrope, and verbena—flowers familiar enough to him in the expensive and more portable form of bouquets, but, as it seemed to him then, never before so notably lovely. Perhaps it was because the dew was yet fresh upon them, perhaps it was because they were unplucked, but Mr. Oakhurst admired them, not as a possible future tribute to the fascinating and accomplished Miss Ethelinda, then performing at the Varieties, for Mr. Oakhurst's especial benefit, as she had often assured him; nor yet as a *douceur* to the enthralling Miss Montmorrissy, with whom Mr. Oakhurst expected to sup that evening, but simply for himself, and mayhap for the flowers' sake. Howbeit, he passed on, and so out into the open plaza, where, finding a bench under a cottonwood-tree, he first dusted the seat with his handkerchief, and then sat down.

It was a fine morning. The air was so still and calm that a sigh from the sycamores seemed like the deep-drawn breath of the just awakening tree, and the faint rustle of its boughs as the outstretching of cramped and reviving limbs. Far away the Sierras stood out against a sky so remote as to be of no positive color—so remote that even the sun despaired of ever reaching it, and so expended its strength recklessly on the whole landscape, until it fairly glittered in a white and vivid contrast. With a very rare impulse, Mr. Oakhurst took off his hat, and half reclined on the bench, with his face to the sky. Certain birds

who had taken a critical attitude on a spray above him apparently began an animated discussion regarding his possible malevolent intentions. One or two, emboldened by the silence, hopped on the ground at his feet, until the sound of wheels on the gravel walk frightened them away.

Looking up, he saw a man coming slowly toward him, wheeling a nondescript vehicle in which a woman was partly sitting, partly reclining. Without knowing why, Mr. Oakhurst instantly conceived that the carriage was the invention and workmanship of the man, partly from its oddity, partly from the strong, mechanical hand that grasped it, and partly from a certain pride and visible consciousness in the manner in which the man handled it. Then Mr. Oakhurst saw something more—the man's face was familiar. With that regal faculty of not forgetting a face that had ever given him professional audience, he instantly classified it under the following mental formula: "At 'Frisco, Polka Saloon. Lost his week's wages. I reckon seventy dollars—on red. Never came again." There was, however, no trace of this in the calm eyes and unmoved face that he turned upon the stranger, who, on the contrary, blushed, looked embarrassed, hesitated, and then stopped with an involuntary motion that brought the carriage and its fair occupant face to face with Mr. Oakhurst.

I should hardly do justice to the position she will occupy in this veracious chronicle by describing the lady now—if, indeed, I am able to do it at all.

Certainly, the popular estimate was conflicting. The late Colonel Starbottle—to whose large experience of a charming sex I have before been indebted for many valuable suggestions—had, I regret to say, depreciated her fascinations. "A yellow-faced cripple, by dash—a sick woman, with mahogany eyes. One of your blanked spiritual creatures, with no flesh on her bones." On the other hand, however, she enjoyed later much complimentary disparagement from her own sex. Miss Celestina Howard, second leader in the ballet at the Varieties, had, with great alliterative directness, in after years, denominated her as an "aquiline asp." Mlle. Brimborion remembered that she had always warned "Mr. Jack" that this woman would "empoison" him. But Mr. Oakhurst, whose impressions are perhaps the most important, only saw a pale, thin, deep-eyed woman, raised above the level of her companion by the refinement of long suffering and isolation, and a certain shy virginity of manner. There was a suggestion of physical purity in the folds of her fresh-looking robe, and a certain picturesque tastefulness in the details, that, without knowing why, made him think that the robe was her invention and handiwork, even as the carriage she occupied was evidently the work of her companion. Her own hand, a trifle too thin, but well-shaped, subtle-fingered, and gentle-womanly, rested on the side of the carriage, the counterpart of the strong mechanical grasp of her companion's.

There was some obstruction to the progress of

the vehicle, and Mr. Oakhurst stepped forward to assist. While the wheel was being lifted over the curbstone, it was necessary that she should hold his arm, and for a moment her thin hand rested there, light and cold as a snowflake, and then—as it seemed to him—like a snowflake melted away. Then there was a pause, and then conversation—the lady joining occasionally and shyly.

It appeared that they were man and wife. That for the past two years she had been a great invalid, and had lost the use of her lower limbs from rheumatism. That until lately she had been confined to her bed, until her husband—who was a master carpenter—had bethought himself to make her this carriage. He took her out regularly for an airing before going to work, because it was his only time, and—they attracted less attention. They had tried many doctors, but without avail. They had been advised to go to the Sulphur Springs, but it was expensive. Mr. Decker, the husband, had once saved eighty dollars for that purpose, but while in San Francisco had his pocket picked—Mr. Decker was so senseless. (The intelligent reader need not be told that it is the lady who is speaking.) They had never been able to make up the sum again, and they had given up the idea. It was a dreadful thing to have one's pocket picked. Did he not think so?

Her husband's face was crimson, but Mr. Oakhurst's countenance was quite calm and unmoved, as he gravely agreed with her, and walked by her side until they passed the little garden that he had

admired. Here Mr. Oakhurst commanded a halt, and, going to the door, astounded the proprietor by a preposterously extravagant offer for a choice of the flowers. Presently he returned to the carriage with his arms full of roses, heliotrope, and verbena, and cast them in the lap of the invalid. While she was bending over them with childish delight, Mr. Oakhurst took the opportunity of drawing her husband aside.

"Perhaps," he said in a low voice, and a manner quite free from any personal annoyance—"perhaps it's just as well that you lied to her as you did. You can say now that the pickpocket was arrested the other day, and you got your money back." Mr. Oakhurst quietly slipped four twenty-dollar gold-pieces into the broad hand of the bewildered Mr. Decker. "Say that—or anything you like —but the truth. Promise me you won't say that!"

The man promised. Mr. Oakhurst quietly returned to the front of the little carriage. The sick woman was still eagerly occupied with the flowers, and as she raised her eyes to his, her faded cheek seemed to have caught some color from the roses, and her eyes some of their dewy freshness. But at that instant Mr. Oakhurst lifted his hat, and before she could thank him was gone.

I grieve to say that Mr. Decker shamelessly broke his promise. That night, in the very goodness of his heart and uxorious self-abnegation, he, like all devoted husbands, not only offered himself, but his friend and benefactor, as a sacrifice on the

family altar. It is only fair, however, to add that he spoke with great fervor of the generosity of Mr. Oakhurst, and dealt with an enthusiasm quite common with his class on the mysterious fame and prodigal vices of the gambler.

"And now, Elsie, dear, say that you'll forgive me," said Mr. Decker, dropping on one knee beside his wife's couch. "I did it for the best. It was for you, dearey, that I put that money on them cards that night in 'Frisco. I thought to win a heap—enough to take you away, and enough left to get you a new dress."

Mrs. Decker smiled and pressed her husband's hand. "I do forgive you, Joe, dear," she said, still smiling, with eyes abstractedly fixed on the ceiling; "and you ought to be whipped for deceiving me so, you bad boy, and making me make such a speech. There, say no more about it. If you'll be very good hereafter, and will just now hand me that cluster of roses, I'll forgive you." She took the branch in her fingers, lifted the roses to her face, and presently said, behind their leaves—

"Joe!"

"What is it, lovey?"

"Do you think that this Mr. — what do you call him?—Jack Oakhurst would have given that money back to you if I hadn't made that speech?"

"Yes."

"If he hadn't seen me at all?"

Mr. Decker looked up. His wife had managed in some way to cover up her whole face with the

roses, except her eyes, which were dangerously bright.

"No; it was you, Elsie—it was all along of seeing you that made him do it."

"A poor sick woman like me?"

"A sweet, little, lovely, pooty Elsie—Joe's own little wifey! How could he help it?"

Mrs. Decker fondly cast one arm around her husband's neck, still keeping the roses to her face with the other. From behind them she began to murmur gently and idiotically, "Dear, ole square Joey. Elsie's oney booful big bear." But, really, I do not see that my duty as a chronicler of facts compels me to continue this little lady's speech any further, and out of respect to the unmarried reader I stop.

Nevertheless, the next morning Mrs. Decker betrayed some slight and apparently uncalled-for irritability on reaching the plaza, and presently desired her husband to wheel her back home. Moreover, she was very much astonished at meeting Mr. Oakhurst just as they were returning, and she doubted if it were he, and questioned her husband as to his identity with the stranger of yesterday as he approached. Her manner to Mr. Oakhurst, also, was quite in contrast with her husband's frank welcome. Mr. Oakhurst instantly detected it. "Her husband has told her all, and she dislikes me," he said to himself, with that fatal appreciation of the half-truths of a woman's motives that causes the wisest masculine critic to stumble. He lingered only long enough

to take the business address of the husband, and then, lifting his hat gravely, without looking at the lady, went his way. It struck the honest master carpenter as one of the charming anomalies of his wife's character that, although the meeting was evidently very much constrained and unpleasant, instantly afterward his wife's spirits began to rise. "You was hard on him—a leetle hard, wasn't you, Elsie?" said Mr. Decker deprecatingly. "I'm afraid he may think I've broke my promise." "Ah, indeed," said the lady indifferently. Mr. Decker instantly stepped round to the front of the vehicle. "You look like an A 1 first-class lady riding down Broadway in her own carriage, Elsie," said he; "I never seed you lookin' so peart and sassy before."

A few days later the proprietor of the San Isabel Sulphur Springs received the following note in Mr. Oakhurst's well-known dainty hand:

DEAR STEVE—I've been thinking over your proposition to buy Nichols's quarter interest and have concluded to go in. But I don't see how the thing will pay until you have more accommodation down there, and for the best class—I mean *my* customers. What we want is an extension to the main building, and two or three cottages put up. I send down a builder to take hold of the job at once. He takes his sick wife with him, and you are to look after them as you would for one of us.

I may run down there myself, after the races, just to look after things; but I sha'n't set upon any game this season.

Yours always,

JOHN OAKHURST.

It was only the last sentence of this letter that provoked criticism. "I can understand," said Mr. Hamlin, a professional brother, to whom Mr. Oakhurst's letter was shown—"I can understand why Jack goes in heavy and builds; for it's a sure spec, and is bound to be a mighty soft thing in time, if he comes here regularly. But why in blank he don't set up a bank this season and take the chance of getting some of the money back that he puts into circulation in building, is what gets me. I wonder now," he mused deeply, "what *is* his little game."

The season had been a prosperous one to Mr. Oakhurst, and proportionally disastrous to several members of the Legislature, judges, colonels, and others who had enjoyed but briefly the pleasure of Mr. Oakhurst's midnight society. And yet Sacramento had become very dull to him. He had lately formed a habit of early morning walks—so unusual and startling to his friends, both male and female, as to occasion the intensest curiosity. Two or three of the latter set spies upon his track, but the inquisition resulted only in the discovery that Mr. Oakhurst walked to the plaza, sat down upon one particular bench for a few moments, and then returned without seeing anybody, and the theory that there was a woman in the case was abandoned. A few superstitious gentlemen of his own profession believed that he did it for "luck." Some others, more practical, declared that he went out to "study points."

After the races at Marysville, Mr. Oakhurst

went to San Francisco; from that place he returned to Marysville, but a few days after was seen at San José, Santa Cruz, and Oakland. Those who met him declared that his manner was restless and feverish, and quite unlike his ordinary calmness and phlegm. Colonel Starbottle pointed out the fact that at San Francisco, at the Club, Jack had declined to deal. "Hand shaky, sir—depend upon it; don't stimulate enough—blank him!"

From San José he started to go to Oregon by land with a rather expensive outfit of horses and camp equipage, but on reaching Stockton he suddenly diverged, and four hours later found him, with a single horse, entering the cañon of the San Isabel Warm Sulphur Springs.

It was a pretty triangular valley lying at the foot of three sloping mountains, dark with pines and fantastic with madroño and manzanita. Nestling against the mountain-side, the straggling buildings and long piazza of the hotel glittered through the leaves; and here and there shone a white toy-like cottage. Mr. Oakhurst was not an admirer of nature, but he felt something of the same novel satisfaction in the view that he experienced in his first morning walk in Sacramento. And now carriages began to pass him on the road filled with gayly dressed women, and the cold California outlines of the landscape began to take upon themselves somewhat of a human warmth and color. And then the long hotel piazza came in view, efflorescent with the full-toileted fair. Mr.

Oakhurst, a good rider after the California fashion, did not check his speed as he approached his destination, but charged the hotel at a gallop, threw his horse on his haunches within a foot of the piazza, and then quietly emerged from the cloud of dust that veiled his dismounting.

Whatever feverish excitement might have raged within, all his habitual calm returned as he stepped upon the piazza. With the instinct of long habit he turned and faced the battery of eyes with the same cold indifference with which he had for years encountered the half-hidden sneers of men and the half-frightened admiration of women. Only one person stepped forward to welcome him. Oddly enough, it was Dick Hamilton, perhaps the only one present who, by birth, education, and position, might have satisfied the most fastidious social critic. Happily for Mr. Oakhurst's reputation, he was a very rich banker and social leader. "Do you know who that is you spoke to?" asked young Parker, with an alarmed expression. "Yes," replied Hamilton, with characteristic effrontery; "the man you lost a thousand dollars to last week. *I* only know him *socially*." "But isn't he a gambler?" queried the youngest Miss Smith. "He is," replied Hamilton; "but I wish, my dear young lady, that we all played as open and honest a game as our friend yonder, and were willing as he is to abide by its fortunes."

But Mr. Oakhurst was happily out of hearing of this colloquy, and was even then lounging listlessly, yet watchfully, along the upper hall. Sud-

denly he heard a light footstep behind him, and then his name called in a familiar voice that drew the blood quickly to his heart. He turned, and she stood before him.

But how transformed! If I have hesitated to describe the hollow-eyed cripple—the quaintly dressed artisan's wife, a few pages ago—what shall I do with this graceful, shapely, elegantly attired gentlewoman into whom she has been merged within these two months? In good faith, she was very pretty. You and I, my dear madam, would have been quick to see that those charming dimples were misplaced for true beauty, and too fixed in their quality for honest mirthfulness; that the delicate lines around those aquiline nostrils were cruel and selfish; that the sweet, virginal surprise of those lovely eyes was as apt to be opened on her plate as upon the gallant speeches of her dinner partner; that her sympathetic color came and went more with her own spirits than yours. But you and I are not in love with her, dear madam, and Mr. Oakhurst is. And even in the folds of her Parisian gown, I am afraid this poor fellow saw the same subtle strokes of purity that he had seen in her homespun robe. And then there was the delightful revelation that she could walk, and that she had dear little feet of her own in the tiniest slippers of her French shoemaker, with such preposterous blue bows, and Chappell's own stamp, Rue de something or other, Paris, on the narrow sole.

He ran toward her with a heightened color and outstretched hands. But she whipped her own

behind her, glanced rapidly up and down the long hall, and stood looking at him with a half-audacious, half-mischievous admiration in utter contrast to her old reserve.

"I've a great mind not to shake hands with you at all. You passed me just now on the piazza without speaking, and I ran after you, as I suppose many another poor woman has done."

Mr. Oakhurst stammered that she was so changed.

"The more reason why you should know me. Who changed me? You. You have re-created me. You found a helpless, crippled, sick, poverty-stricken woman, with one dress to her back, and that her own make, and you gave her life, health, strength, and fortune. You did, and you know it, sir. How do you like your work?" She caught the side seams of her gown in either hand and dropped him a playful courtesy. Then, with a sudden, relenting gesture, she gave him both her hands.

Outrageous as this speech was, and unfeminine, as I trust every fair reader will deem it, I fear it pleased Mr. Oakhurst. Not but that he was accustomed to a certain frank female admiration; but then it was of the *coulisses* and not of the cloister, with which he always persisted in associating Mrs. Decker. To be addressed in this way by an invalid Puritan, a sick saint, with the austerity of suffering still clothing her—a woman who had a Bible on the dressing-table, who went to church three times a day, and was devoted to her

husband, completely bowled him over. He still held her hands as she went on—

"Why didn't you come before? What were you doing in Marysville, in San José, in Oakland? You see I have followed you. I saw you as you came down the cañon, and knew you at once. I saw your letter to Joseph, and knew you were coming. Why didn't you write to me? You will some time! Good-evening, Mr. Hamilton."

She had withdrawn her hands, but not until Hamilton, ascending the staircase, was nearly abreast of them. He raised his hat to her with well-bred composure, nodded familiarly to Oakhurst, and passed on. When he had gone Mrs. Decker lifted her eyes to Mr. Oakhurst. "Some day I shall ask a great favor of you!"

Mr. Oakhurst begged that it should be now. "No, not until you know me better. Then, some day, I shall want you to—kill that man!"

She laughed, such a pleasant little ringing laugh, such a display of dimples—albeit a little fixed in the corners of her mouth—such an innocent light in her brown eyes, and such a lovely color in her cheeks, that Mr. Oakhurst—who seldom laughed—was fain to laugh, too. It was as if a lamb had proposed to a fox a foray into a neighboring sheepfold.

A few evenings after this, Mrs. Decker arose from a charmed circle of her admirers on the hotel piazza, excused herself for a few moments, laughingly declined an escort, and ran over to her little cottage—one of her husband's creation—across the

road. Perhaps from the sudden and unwonted exercise in her still convalescent state, she breathed hurriedly and feverishly as she entered her boudoir, and once or twice placed her hand upon her breast. She was startled on turning up the light to find her husband lying on the sofa.

"You look hot and excited, Elsie, love," said Mr. Decker; "you ain't took worse, are you?"

Mrs. Decker's face had paled, but now flushed again. "No," she said, "only a little pain here," as she again placed her hand upon her corsage.

"Can I do anything for you?" said Mr. Decker, rising with affectionate concern.

"Run over to the hotel and get me some brandy, quick!"

Mr. Decker ran. Mrs. Decker closed and bolted the door, and then putting her hand to her bosom, drew out the pain. It was folded four-square, and was, I grieve to say, in Mr. Oakhurst's handwriting.

She devoured it with burning eyes and cheeks until there came a step upon the porch. Then she hurriedly replaced it in her bosom and unbolted the door. Her husband entered; she raised the spirits to her lips and declared herself better.

"Are you going over there again to-night?" asked Mr. Decker submissively.

"No," said Mrs. Decker, with her eyes fixed dreamily on the floor.

"I wouldn't if I was you," said Mr. Decker with a sigh of relief. After a pause he took a seat on the sofa, and drawing his wife to his side, said,

"Do you know what I was thinking of when you came in, Elsie?" Mrs. Decker ran her fingers through his stiff black hair, and couldn't imagine.

"I was thinking of old times, Elsie; I was thinking of the days when I built that kerridge for you, Elsie—when I used to take you out to ride, and was both hoss and driver! We was poor then, and you was sick, Elsie, but we was happy. We've got money now, and a house, and you're quite another woman. I may say, dear, that you're a *new* woman. And that's where the trouble comes in. I could build you a kerridge, Elsie; I could build you a house, Elsie—but there I stopped. I couldn't build up *you*. You're strong and pretty, Elsie, and fresh and new. But somehow, Elsie, you ain't no work of mine!"

He paused. With one hand laid gently on his forehead and the other pressed upon her bosom as if to feel certain of the presence of her pain, she said sweetly and soothingly:

"But it was your work, dear."

Mr. Decker shook his head sorrowfully. "No, Elsie, not mine. I had the chance to do it once and I let it go. It's done now; but not by me."

Mrs. Decker raised her surprised, innocent eyes to his. He kissed her tenderly, and then went on in a more cheerful voice:

"That ain't all I was thinking of, Elsie. I was thinking that maybe you give too much of your company to that Mr. Hamilton. Not that there's any wrong in it, to you or him. But it might make

people talk. You're the only one here, Elsie," said the master carpenter, looking fondly at his wife, "who isn't talked about; whose work ain't inspected or condemned."

Mrs. Decker was glad he had spoken about it. She had thought so, too, but she could not well be uncivil to Mr. Hamilton, who was a fine gentleman without making a powerful enemy. "And he's always treated me as if I was a born lady in his own circle," added the little woman, with a certain pride that made her husband fondly smile. "But I have thought of a plan. He will not stay here if I should go away. If, for instance, I went to San Francisco to visit ma for a few days, he would be gone before I should return."

Mr. Decker was delighted. "By all means," he said; "go to-morrow. Jack Oakhurst is going down, and I'll put you in his charge."

Mrs. Decker did not think it was prudent. "Mr. Oakhurst is our friend, Joseph, but you know his reputation." In fact, she did not know that she ought to go now, knowing that he was going the same day; but with a kiss Mr. Decker overcame her scruples. She yielded gracefully. Few women, in fact, knew how to give up a point as charmingly as she.

She stayed a week in San Francisco. When she returned she was a trifle thinner and paler than she had been. This she explained as the result of perhaps too active exercise and excitement. "I was out of doors nearly all the time, as ma will tell you," she said to her husband, "and always alone.

I am getting quite independent now," she added gaily. "I don't want any escort—I believe, Joey, dear, I could get along even without you—I'm so brave!"

But her visit, apparently, had not been productive of her impelling design. Mr. Hamilton had not gone, but had remained, and called upon them that very evening. "I've thought of a plan, Joey, dear," said Mrs. Decker when he had departed. "Poor Mr. Oakhurst has a miserable room at the hotel—suppose you ask him when he returns from San Francisco to stop with us. He can have our spare room. I don't think," she added archly, "that Mr. Hamilton will call often." Her husband laughed, intimated that she was a little coquette, pinched her cheek, and complied. "The queer thing about a woman," he said afterwards confidentially to Mr. Oakhurst, "is, that without having any plan of her own, she'll take anybody's and build a house on it entirely different to suit herself. And dern my skin, if you'll be able to say whether or not you didn't give the scale and measurements yourself. That's what gets me."

The next week Mr. Oakhurst was installed in the Deckers' cottage. The business relations of her husband and himself were known to all, and her own reputation was above suspicion. Indeed, few women were more popular. She was domestic, she was prudent, she was pious. In a country of great feminine freedom and latitude, she never rode or walked with anybody but her husband; in

an epoch of slang and ambiguous expression, she was always precise and formal in her speech; in the midst of a fashion of ostentatious decoration she never wore a diamond, nor a single valuable jewel. She never permitted an indecorum in public; she never countenanced the familiarities of California society. She declaimed against the prevailing tone of infidelity and scepticism in religion. Few people who were present will ever forget the dignified yet stately manner with which she rebuked Mr. Hamilton in the public parlor for entering upon the discussion of a work on materialism, lately published; and some among them, also, will not forget the expression of amused surprise on Mr. Hamilton's face, that gradually changed to sardonic gravity as he courteously waived his point. Certainly, not Mr. Oakhurst, who from that moment began to be uneasily impatient of his friend, and even—if such a term could be applied to any moral quality in Mr. Oakhurst—to fear him.

For, during this time, Mr. Oakhurst had begun to show symptoms of a change in his usual habits. He was seldom, if ever, seen in his old haunts, in a bar-room, or with his old associates. Pink and white notes, in distracted handwriting, accumulated on the dressing-table in his rooms at Sacramento. It was given out in San Francisco that he had some organic disease of the heart, for which his physician had prescribed perfect rest. He read more, he took long walks, he sold his fast horses, he went to church.

I have a very vivid recollection of his first appearance there. He did not accompany the Deckers, nor did he go into their pew, but came in as the service commenced, and took a seat quietly in one of the back pews. By some mysterious instinct his presence became presently known to the congregation, some of whom so far forgot themselves, in their curiosity, as to face around and apparently address their responses to him. Before the service was over it was pretty well understood that "miserable sinners" meant Mr. Oakhurst. Nor did this mysterious influence fail to affect the officiating clergyman, who introduced an allusion to Mr. Oakhurst's calling and habits in a sermon on the architecture of Solomon's Temple, and in a manner so pointed and yet labored as to cause the youngest of us to flame with indignation. Happily, however, it was lost upon Jack; I do not think he even heard it. His handsome, colorless face—albeit a trifle worn and thoughtful—was inscrutable. Only once, during the singing of a hymn, at a certain note in the contralto's voice, there crept into his dark eyes a look of wistful tenderness, so yearning and yet so hopeless that those who were watching him felt their own glisten. Yet I retain a very vivid remembrance of his standing up to receive the benediction, with the suggestion, in his manner and tightly buttoned coat, of taking the fire of his adversary at ten paces. After church he disappeared as quietly as he had entered, and fortunately escaped hearing the comments on his rash act. His appearance was generally con-

sidered as an impertinence—attributable only to some wanton fancy—or possibly a bet. One or two thought that the sexton was exceedingly remiss in not turning him out after discovering who he was; and a prominent pewholder remarked that if he couldn't take his wife and daughters to that church without exposing them to such an influence, he would try to find some church where he could. Another traced Mr. Oakhurst's presence to certain Broad Church radical tendencies, which he regretted to say he had lately noted in their pastor. Deacon Sawyer, whose delicately organized, sickly wife had already borne him eleven children, and died in an ambitious attempt to complete the dozen, avowed that the presence of a person of Mr. Oakhurst's various and indiscriminate gallantries was an insult to the memory of the deceased that, as a man, he could not brook.

It was about this time that Mr. Oakhurst, contrasting himself with a conventional world in which he had hitherto rarely mingled, became aware that there was something in his face, figure, and carriage quite unlike other men—something that if it did not betray his former career, at least showed an individuality and originality that was suspicious. In this belief he shaved off his long, silken moustache, and religiously brushed out his clustering curls every morning. He even went so far as to effect a negligence of dress, and hid his small, slim, arched feet in the largest and heaviest walking-shoes. There is a story told that he went to his tailor in Sacramento, and asked him to make

him a suit of clothes like everybody else. The tailor, familiar with Mr. Oakhurst's fastidiousness, did not know what he meant. "I mean," said Mr. Oakhurst savagely, "something *respectable* —something that doesn't exactly fit me, you know." But however Mr. Oakhurst might hide his shapely limbs in homespun and home-made garments, there was something in his carriage, something in the pose of his beautiful head, something in the strong and fine manliness of his presence, something in the perfect and utter discipline and control of his muscles, something in the high repose of his nature—a repose not so much a matter of intellectual ruling as of his very nature—that go where he would, and with whom, he was always a notable man in ten thousand. Perhaps this was never so clearly intimated to Mr. Oakhurst as when, emboldened by Mr. Hamilton's advice and assistance and his predilections, he became a San Francisco broker. Even before objection was made to his presence in the Board—the objection, I remember, was urged very eloquently by Watt Sanders, who was supposed to be the inventor of the "freezing-out" system of disposing of poor stockholders, and who also enjoyed the reputation of having been the impelling cause of Briggs of Tuolumne's ruin and suicide—even before this formal protest of respectability against lawlessness, the aquiline suggestions of Mr. Oakhurst's mien and countenance not only prematurely fluttered the pigeons, but absolutely occasioned much uneasiness among the fish-hawks,

who circled below him with their booty. "Dash me! but he's as likely to go after us as anybody," said Joe Fielding.

It wanted but a few days before the close of the brief summer season at San Isabel Warm Springs. Already there had been some migration of the more fashionable, and there was an uncomfortable suggestion of dregs and lees in the social life that remained. Mr. Oakhurst was moody; it was hinted that even the secure reputation of Mrs. Decker could no longer protect her from the gossip which his presence excited. It is but fair to her to say that during the last few weeks of this trying ordeal she looked like a sweet, pale martyr, and conducted herself toward her traducers with the gentle, forgiving manner of one who relied not upon the idle homage of the crowd, but upon the security of a principle that was dearer than popular favor. "They talk about myself and Mr. Oakhurst, my dear," she said to a friend, "but Heaven and my husband can best answer their calumny. It never shall be said that my husband ever turned his back upon a friend in the moment of his adversity because the position was changed, because his friend was poor and he was rich." This was the first intimation to the public that Jack had lost money, although it was known generally that the Deckers had lately bought some valuable property in San Francisco.

A few evenings after this an incident occurred which seemed to unpleasantly discord with the general social harmony that had always existed at

San Isabel. It was at dinner, and Mr. Oakhurst and Mr. Hamilton, who sat together at a separate table, were observed to rise in some agitation. When they reached the hall, by a common instinct they stepped into a little breakfast-room which was vacant, and closed the door. Then Mr. Hamilton turned, with a half-amused, half-serious smile, toward his friend, and said:

"If we are to quarrel, Jack Oakhurst—you and I—in the name of all that is ridiculous, don't let it be about a——"

I do not know what was the epithet intended. It was either unspoken or lost. For at that very instant Mr. Oakhurst raised a wine-glass and dashed its contents into Hamilton's face.

As they faced each other the men seemed to have changed natures. Mr. Oakhurst was trembling with excitement, and the wine-glass that he returned to the table shivered between his fingers. Mr. Hamilton stood there, grayish white, erect, and dripping. After a pause he said coldly:

"So be it. But remember! our quarrel commences here. If I fall by your hand, you shall not use it to clear her character; if you fall by mine, you shall not be called a martyr. I am sorry it has come to this, but amen!—the sooner now the better."

He turned proudly, dropped his lids over his cold steel-blue eyes, as if sheathing a rapier, bowed and passed coldly out.

They met twelve hours later in a little hollow two miles from the hotel, on the Stockton road.

As Mr. Oakhurst received his pistol from Colonel Starbottle's hands he said to him in a low voice, "Whatever turns up or down I shall not return to the hotel. You will find some directions in my room. Go there"—but his voice suddenly faltered, and he turned his glistening eyes away, to his second's intense astonishment. "I've been out a dozen times with Jack Oakhurst," said Colonel Starbottle afterwards, "and I never saw him anyways cut before. Blank me if I didn't think he was losing his sand, till he walked to position."

The two reports were almost simultaneous. Mr. Oakhurst's right arm dropped suddenly to his side, and his pistol would have fallen from his paralyzed fingers, but the discipline of trained nerve and muscle prevailed, and he kept his grasp until he had shifted it to the other hand, without changing his position. Then there was a silence that seemed interminable, a gathering of two or three dark figures where a smoke curl still lazily floated, and then the hurried, husky, panting voice of Colonel Starbottle in his ear, "He's hit hard—through the lungs—you must run for it!"

Jack turned his dark, questioning eyes upon his second, but did not seem to listen; rather seemed to hear some other voice, remoter in the distance. He hesitated, and then made a step forward in the direction of the distant group. Then he paused again as the figures separated, and the surgeon came hastily toward him.

"He would like to speak with you a moment,"

said the man. "You have little time to lose, I know; but," he added in a lower voice, "it is my duty to tell you he has still less."

A look of despair so hopeless in its intensity swept over Mr. Oakhurst's usually impassive face that the surgeon started. "You are hit," he said, glancing at Jack's helpless arm.

"Nothing—a mere scratch," said Jack hastily. Then he added, with a bitter laugh, "I'm not in luck to-day. But come! We'll see what he wants."

His long feverish stride outstripped the surgeon's, and in another moment he stood where the dying man lay—like most dying men—the one calm, composed, central figure of an anxious group. Mr. Oakhurst's face was less calm as he dropped on one knee beside him and took his hand. "I want to speak with this gentleman alone," said Hamilton, with something of his old imperious manner, as he turned to those about him. When they drew back, he looked up in Oakhurst's face.

"I've something to tell you, Jack."

His own face was white, but not so white as that which Mr. Oakhurst bent over him—a face so ghastly, with haunting doubts and a hopeless presentiment of coming evil, a face so piteous in its infinite weariness and envy of death, that the dying man was touched, even in the languor of dissolution, with a pang of compassion, and the cynical smile faded from his lips.

"Forgive me, Jack," he whispered more feebly, "for what I have to say. I don't say it in anger,

but only because it must be said. I could not do my duty to you—I could not die contented until you knew it all. It's a miserable business at best, all around. But it can't be helped now. Only I ought to have fallen by Decker's pistol and not yours."

A flush like fire came into Jack's cheek, and he would have risen, but Hamilton held him fast.

"Listen! in my pocket you will find two letters. Take them—there! You will know the handwriting. But promise you will not read them until you are in a place of safety. Promise me!"

Jack did not speak, but held the letters between his fingers as if they had been burning coals.

"Promise me," said Hamilton faintly.

"Why?" asked Oakhurst, dropping his friend's hand coldly.

"Because," said the dying man with a bitter smile—"because—when you have read them—you —will—go back—to capture—and death!"

They were his last words. He pressed Jack's hand faintly. Then his grasp relaxed, and he fell back a corpse.

It was nearly ten o'clock at night, and Mrs. Decker reclined languidly upon the sofa with a novel in her hand, while her husband discussed the politics of the country in the bar-room of the hotel. It was a warm night, and the French window looking out upon a little balcony was partly open. Suddenly she heard a foot upon the balcony, and she raised her eyes from the book with a slight

start. The next moment the window was hurriedly thrust wide and a man entered.

Mrs. Decker rose to her feet with a little cry of alarm.

"For Heaven's sake, Jack, are you mad? He has only gone for a little while—he may return at any moment. Come an hour later—to-morrow—any time when I can get rid of him—but go, now, dear, at once."

Mr. Oakhurst walked toward the door, bolted it, and then faced her without a word. His face was haggard, his coat-sleeve hung loosely over an arm that was bandaged and bloody.

Nevertheless, her voice did not falter as she turned again toward him. "What has happened, Jack? Why are you here?"

He opened his coat, and threw two letters in her lap.

"To return your lover's letters—to kill you—and then myself," he said in a voice so low as to be almost inaudible.

Among the many virtues of this admirable woman was invincible courage. She did not faint, she did not cry out. She sat quietly down again, folded her hands in her lap, and said calmly:

"And why should you not?"

Had she recoiled, had she shown any fear or contrition, had she essayed an explanation or apology, Mr. Oakhurst would have looked upon it as an evidence of guilt. But there is no quality that courage recognizes so quickly as courage, there is no condition that desperation bows before

but desperation; and Mr. Oakhurst's power of analysis was not so keen as to prevent him from confounding her courage with a moral quality. Even in his fury he could not help admiring this dauntless invalid.

"Why should you not?" she repeated with a smile. "You gave me life, health, and happiness, Jack. You gave me your love. Why should you not take what you have given? Go on. I am ready."

She held out her hands with that same infinite grace of yielding with which she had taken his own on the first day of their meeting at the hotel. Jack raised his head, looked at her for one wild moment, dropped upon his knees beside her, and raised the folds of her dress to his feverish lips. But she was too clever not to instantly see her victory; she was too much of a woman, with all her cleverness, to refrain from pressing that victory home. At the same moment, as with the impulse of an outraged and wounded woman, she rose, and with an imperious gesture pointed to the window. Mr. Oakhurst rose in his turn, cast one glance upon her, and without another word passed out of her presence forever.

When he had gone, she closed the window and bolted it, and going to the chimney-piece placed the letters, one by one, in the flame of the candle until they were consumed. I would not have the reader think that during this painful operation she was unmoved. Her hand trembled and—not being a brute—for some minutes (perhaps longer)

she felt very badly, and the corners of her sensitive mouth were depressed. When her husband arrived it was with a genuine joy that she ran to him, and nestled against his broad breast with a feeling of security that thrilled the honest fellow to the core.

"But I've heard dreadful news to-night, Elsie," said Mr. Decker, after a few endearments were exchanged.

"Don't tell me anything dreadful, dear; I'm not well to-night," she pleaded sweetly.

"But it's about Mr. Oakhurst and Hamilton."

"Please!" Mr. Decker could not resist the petitionary grace of those white hands and that sensitive mouth, and took her to his arms. Suddenly he said, "What's that?"

He was pointing to the bosom of her white dress. Where Mr. Oakhurst had touched her there was a spot of blood.

It was nothing; she had slightly cut her hand in closing the window; it shut so hard! If Mr. Decker had remembered to close and bolt the shutter before he went out, he might have saved her this. There was such a genuine irritability and force in this remark that Mr. Decker was quite overcome by remorse. But Mrs. Decker forgave him with that graciousness which I have before pointed out in these pages, and with the halo of that forgiveness and marital confidence still lingering above the pair, with the reader's permission we will leave them and return to Mr. Oakhurst.

But not for two weeks. At the end of that time

he walked into his rooms in Sacramento, and in his old manner took his seat at the faro-table.

"How's your arm, Jack?" asked an incautious player.

There was a smile followed the question, which, however, ceased as Jack looked up quietly at the speaker.

"It bothers my dealing a little, but I can shoot as well with my left."

The game was continued in that decorous silence which usually distinguished the table at which Mr. John Oakhurst presided.

BRET HARTE.

DECEMBER 5

BOYHOOD IN MAINE*

My Father

"PA," AND "Ma'am," as we called our parents, were both pretty illiterate, and although they could read and write they did it awkwardly. They couldn't spell very well, and when my father read aloud he would mispronounce many words. We all spoke the rustic dialect of the region; and even now, when I'm talking about events which happened in my boyhood, I'm very apt to drop into the Maine vernacular in certain respects.

Father was a keen reasoner, talked fluently and entertainingly, and was never profane nor vulgar. He was fond of books, but had only a handful. For one thing, he had patent office reports which he got free by writing for them, and he read them religiously. There were a few old schoolbooks that he picked up when he was peddling his wooden ware. Among them were several readers and a Parker's Philosophy and a physiology. Another book was "The Wonders of Nature and Providence." He had the Bible, and he had Rollins's

*From "Hudson Maxim," by permission of the authors, Hudson Maxim and Clifton Johnson.

"Ancient History" in several volumes, leather-bound. There were no stories. I learned all the verses in the old reading books. In fact, I got to know pretty well the substance of every book in the house. Father was fond of verse, and my sisters used to read poetry aloud. So I learned many poems, just by listening, before I could read them with any kind of success.

We hardly ever had any newspapers, and even when I got to be a young man, it didn't matter to me whether a thing happened to-day, yesterday, or a thousand years ago. The significance was about the same, so far as time was concerned. Most current events didn't make any appeal to me. Historical events did, and so did local news, yes, and the Civil War while it was being fought, though I was only twelve years old when it ended.

Father knew Rollins's "Ancient History" and the Bible practically by heart, and he was a great instructor to us children. In the evening, or any time that we sat down and asked him to tell us some things about history, he would give us long and interesting talks on the history of the world. He was very familiar with the life of Napoleon, and used to tell us a lot about him.

But he didn't by any means confine his attention to serious topics. He was a great hand to tell stories. I don't know where he got them, but they were wonderful stories. His conversation was spiced with wit and humor and irony. He laughed easily, and his laugh was big and hearty.

His attitude toward us children in the matter of

moral guidance was not at all dogmatic. He always told us that we must think things out for ourselves, especially when we questioned him on religion. As to planning our lives he said: "You are privileged to do as you please and take the consequences. Build well, and you'll do well. Build badly, and you'll suffer."

. . . Father was a hard worker until, at about the age of fifty, he had the measles. After that he was a little better for a while. Then he had a bilious fever which nearly killed him, and he never fully recovered from it, though he worked a little for many years.

What he did most of the time, before his health became too broken for vigorous work, was to run a gristmill. He ground Indian corn and any other grain that the farmers brought to the mill, and took part of the grist for payment. Some of this "toll," as it was called, was used in our home; and some he sold. He had the siftings of the grain to feed his farm animals. These siftings were a kind of bran which we always spoke of as "chaff."

Father peddled things that he made, especially things that he turned on his lathe; and he peddled pictures that he bought, and took orders for frames that he would make and deliver later; and he used to sell sewing machines. He'd go round driving a wagon in summer and a sleigh in winter.

In 1872, Father went to live in his native town of Wayne, down near Augusta, and he continued to peddle in that vicinity. Both he and Mother

could run a sewing machine. They had a couple of them in the house, and their chief income after moving to Wayne was earned in making coats. A manufacturer of clothing let out the work to the country people. The coats came in great bundles all cut. The padding and lining were laid in place, and the pieces hitched together. A woman could finish four coats in a day. She had to seam them, put on a braid binding and buttons, and make buttonholes.

My Mother

The great formative essentials of a man's character and success are four: first, inheritance from mother; second, inheritance from father; third, environment; and the other chief essential is the right sort of a wife.

Most self-made men are immensely proud of their maker, but as a general thing they are willing to divide honors with their mother. Mother usually is given credit for having been a real angel, all but the wings, and for having been dominated by transcendent kindliness and sympathetic solicitude for the youth who is her offspring, and who is known to her from the first to harbor in his impetuous, recalcitrant self an embryonic embodiment of future greatness.

Had Kipling said that the female of the species is more efficient than the male, his dictum would have applied exactly to my mother. She was a whirlwind of efficiency, and I can't remember a

time when I didn't believe that she could do anything in the world possible of accomplishment by human hands. Her example was most convincing and impelling, and gave to her boys a pattern of courage and ambition to attempt anything that ought to be done.

There is an old Sandwich Islands saying: "If strong be the frame of the mother, the sons shall make laws for the people." My mother was only four feet nine inches in height, and she could walk under my arm, but she was very thickset and weighed nearly one hundred and fifty pounds. Her strength was enormous. I have seen her go out to the well with a big tin clothes boiler, fill it with water, bring it in, and reach over and set it on the stove, entirely unaided.

As to her appearance, she was a blonde, with big blue eyes and abundant, bushy, curly hair, that in coarseness resembled my father's beard. She had a ruddy complexion, and a genial, cheerful look, but her mouth was extraordinarily firm. After she got old, her face became much wrinkled and looked as though it had been cut out of granite. She always was a hard worker, and the care of her eight children when they were young, combined with her other tasks, at length resulted in making her very round-shouldered.

She was a great adept at expedients for overcoming difficulties. She was absolutely fearless, and possessed an energy and endurance which I never have seen equalled in any other human being. She was brave and she was indomitable,

and these qualities sustained her through every hardship, so that she never was fazed at the size or difficulty of any obstacle.

From our father we boys inherited a large proportion of our inventive abilities and our philosophic understanding of nature's laws. From both Father and Mother we inherited great physical strength and powers of endurance, but to our mother we mainly owe the unswervable will and courage to attack with ardent optimism any problem, and face any circumstance or condition.

. . . She was a real Spartan in nearly everything but was dominated by the most self-sacrificing altruism of any woman I ever have known. There was no limit to what she'd do for us. There was no limit to what she'd do for anybody. She was doing something for somebody all the time. If a tramp came along hungry she'd feed him, even though it took the last mouthful of food in the house.

She was quite different from the customary historic mother, for she possessed none of those retiring, responsibility-dodging, tender-hearted little gentlenesses that are exploited with so much effect by the usual feminine. She wasted no time on sentiment and little delicate attentions to us children. Indeed, a show of parental affection would have embarrassed us dreadfully. Yet she'd have gone through hell fire to save us if we were in danger.

So far as I can recall, my mother never kissed me but twice in all the years of my childhood and

youth. Once was when I was a little bit of a boy. She had had a dispute with my older brothers, and while she was putting me to bed that night she kissed me, and said: "When you get to be a big boy, you won't make trouble for your poor old mother—you'll be good to your mother!"

. . . My mother didn't have the interest in history that Father had. She was so busy with the affairs of the house that she let history go hang. She was on the go every minute—cooking, cleaning up, looking after the garden and the horse and the cow and the chickens, and doing the weaving and spinning, and making rugs and our clothes. She had no time for fancy stuff, and we children didn't have much more looking after than little pigs. We just ran wild.

Pa and Ma'am weren't social mixers. You must remember that we were a very poor family just tottering along on the margin line of survival. We were in the same condition of existence as a man is when he gets old and has no strength to spare. He utilizes all his strength simply to live. We were trying to keep soul and body together, trying to keep from starving, trying to keep from freezing to death in winter. When you have to go out in the snow and chop a log into stovewood and bring in the sticks and put them on the fire in order to warm your feet, you don't go making social calls on the neighbors. Certainly the old lady with a large family of children had no time nor inclination for that sort of thing.

Occasionally, late in the afternoon, while pur-

suing her work and carrying the burden of household cares on her mind, she would exclaim:

"O dear me, suzzy day hum,
Another day gone and nothing done!"

Her desire to accomplish outpaced her ability to accomplish.

Yet, in spite of her many cares, she always had some potted plants in the windows. There were balsams, geraniums, and bleeding heart; and she'd have a bed of plants and flowers outside of the house every summer. As for the house itself, she kept it clean and tidy and habitable; and the food she prepared never failed to be palatable.

. . . If a neighbor was sick, my mother was sent for. She always went, and when she came back she would find twice as much work to do as when she went away. She was up at daylight and worked until dark, and after dark she worked by candlelight. She was the first one up and the last one to go to bed. She was the mainstay of the family, the one who bought everything and attended to all the business.

. . . When I was a boy, it was the custom for the mother of a New England family to be accomplished in the production of about everything under the sun required by the household. After my father became an invalid, and Hiram, Lucy, Henry, and Leander had left home, Mother, with such help as four small children could render, did all the housework, cultivated the garden, raised chickens and turkeys, cared for several

sheep, a pig, and a cow, and made butter and cheese. She used to shear the sheep, and spin and weave the wool into cloth, of which to make clothes for us. She dyed and fulled the cloth, then cut it and sewed it up into trousers and jackets. Also she raised flax, rotted it, hatcheled it, and spun it into thread on the little spinning wheel, and wove it on the hand loom, and cut and made the linen into garments. She didn't have a sewing machine until I was about nineteen. After we'd had our clothes for a while only an outline of the original cloth was left. The rest was patches. Mother sat up late many a night mending.

In her spare time she used to cut our worn-out clothes into little strips and make rugs of them. I still have one of those rugs, containing some cloth from an old boyhood suit of mine, made from wool my mother raised and spun and wove. That rug isn't on the floor now. It is kept in a frame, and is hanging on the wall of my library.

Life on a Lonely Farm

While we were living at Grandfather Stevens's house Father was looking about for a farm. As he had only fifty dollars to pay down, he didn't have a very large choice of farms that he could buy on his terms. One of our neighbors was Deacon Bartlett, a fine old gentleman of the sterling sort that does honor to the human race, and he owned an unoccupied farm only a half mile from my grandfather's. He offered it to my father for

two hundred and fifty dollars—house, barn, and some thirty acres of land. The farm wasn't much of a farm, nor the house much of a house, nor the barn much of a barn, but the deal was made, and the farm became our home.

A man named Dutton lived there before we did, and we called it Duttonville, though it was only an outlying farm in a little bit of a clearing in the woods. The house was in the middle of the clearing far back from the highway, and no other house was in sight. This home, where I lived between the ages of ten and thirteen, and one at North Guilford where we moved next, are the two most closely associated with my boyhood life. I was in them a comparatively long time, at the most impressionable period of my youth.

About half of the Duttonville clearing was a pasture. No brush or trees to amount to anything grew in the pasture, and it furnished enough grazing for a cow and a horse and a few sheep. It was fenced with split cedar rails laid up zigzag, except on one side, where there was a stone wall. We had grassland to provide hay for our stock, and we had a garden patch.

Beyond our place a new road went on through the woods—I don't know where. We had no neighbors in that direction, and you wouldn't see anybody go along that road once in a dog's age. Our nearest neighbor was my grandfather Stevens, and somewhat farther on lived old Deacon Bartlett. Next came the schoolhouse at a crossroads two miles from Duttonville, and a half mile more

brought you to the village of Upper Abbot, where there were a church, a blacksmith's shop, a grist-mill, and a combined store and post office.

Our house was a clapboarded, unpainted little building a story and a half high. In front of the old shack of a barn was a small barnyard surrounded by a post and rail fence. There was a set of bars at the entrance to this barnyard, and when we wanted to go in or out we either let down a middle bar and crawled through, or let down the two upper bars and stepped over. We drove the cow home from the pasture each night in summer, and Mother milked her in the barnyard in warm, pleasant weather. The barnyard served in winter as a place where the cow could sun herself and run around. Mother always wanted to milk her cow rather than have any one else do the milking. She thought a milker had to be in sympathy with the cow or the cow would dry up.

There wasn't a fruit tree of any kind on the place and there were no shade trees near the buildings. The vicinity of the house was absolutely bald-headed so far as trees were concerned.

On the ground floor of the house was the kitchen in a small ell. Next to the kitchen was a sitting room, and beyond that were two bedrooms. Upstairs was one big room, with the chimney running up through the middle of it. Sam and I had our bed at one end, and a curtain partitioned off another bedroom, which Sister Eliza sometimes occupied.

The roof leaked more or less, but wasn't as bad

as the sides of the house, in which were great cracks right through to the outer elements. These let the winter storms beat in, and we'd wake up in the morning and find our heads covered with snow. When a window pane was broken and we had no glass to replace it, Father put in a piece of board or stuffed in a cloth.

There was plaster on the walls of some of the rooms, but others were just rough boards. Mother stuck on newspapers and brown wrapping paper when the cracks between the rooms were too conspicuous.

The kitchen floor was bare, but some of the rooms had rag carpets or rag rugs which Mother made. Our old clothes furnished the material. After we wore them out, she would cut them up into narrow strips and braid the strips to use for rugs, or weave the strips into carpets.

The chairs were primitive wooden ones that Father probably picked up in his peddling, and no two were alike. Mother had a rocking-chair, which she sat in when she was sewing or knitting. She did her spinning and weaving in the sitting room, and there she kept her flax wheel, which she called "the little wheel," and one for spinning wool, which she called "the big wheel," and her loom. We didn't have much space left for seating purposes, and we used to sit round wherever we could find a place.

My father peddled pictures that he bought from a New York publisher; and he made and sold frames for the pictures. Some of those pictures

were hung in our rooms. On a kitchen shelf was a large clock with wooden gearing.

We used to have corded beds. Sometimes, when you had nothing but a feather bed under you, the feathers would work one way and the other, until you almost lay on the cord. You had the pattern of the bed-cord on your back the next morning and could play checkers on it if you wanted to.

Mother wove blankets for the beds, and she bought calico and cotton batting and made comforters. During the Civil War cotton got to be so expensive that people took the cotton out of their comforters and sold it. Now and then Mother would make a patchwork quilt—a crazy quilt, we called it. She'd swap pieces of calico with the neighbors to get variety in color and figure.

I don't recall having sheets on the beds in my early youth. Anyhow, we didn't have them during the war. Sheets were worth nigh their weight in gold then, and we slept between the coarse woolen blankets of home manufacture. We had pillows, and the pillow cases were of blue drilling. The pillows were stuffed with feathers—oh, my! all kinds of feathers—of geese, ducks, and hens. Those pillows were fine. We had mattresses—sometimes of corn husks, sometimes of straw. I've helped to fill them. A feather bed would be put on top of the mattress. You'd sink down into it, and it would come up around you and keep you warm.

. . . I've always had the habit of eating

rapidly—far too rapidly. I suppose that the way we children ate when we were at home there in the back country of Maine had a good deal to do with my getting the habit. Whatever food happened to be the most substantial portion of a meal was put in a big dish and placed in the centre of the table. Near this was a platter of bread cut into slices, or, more likely, johnnycake cut into hunks. When we had baked beans, which was every Saturday night, Mother made a loaf of brown bread. About once a week she stewed a beef shank, and after thickening the stew she put in big crusts of bread. It was wonderfully delicious the way she used to make it.

As soon as the table was set, Mother gave the signal for us to come. She often called us as she called the pigs to their repast—"Chug, chug, chug!" And then we all went for the food. Mother usually dished out the stew, or whatever it might be, for us, but unless she was on hand we would dip into the dish for ourselves. There was no delay worth mentioning at any time. You see, it frequently happened that the food was insufficient for our many appetites, and each of us lost no time in getting his or her part of it. Short rations was one of the hardest things we children had to bear. If only there was a plenty we had no complaint to make. How coarse the fare might be didn't matter.

Our table was just a bench which Father had made of smooth pine boards. Mother had a white tablecloth somewhat disfigured by stains, and she

would darn it when holes appeared. She used it only on special occasions. I don't remember having any napkins.

We didn't use much flour. Corn meal served instead. When some neighbor killed a pig or a cow, we generally got a piece of it at a very low price. Mother made hulled corn, and after she'd boiled it we ate it with milk. We filled up on it, and, in a little while, we'd be hungry again and would eat some more. It tasted amazingly good. We seldom had bleached sugar, but my father used to go to a grocery store and buy a molasses hogshead from which the groceryman had sold the molasses. In that there always was a lot of wet, soggy brown sugar. We called it "hogshead sweetening." It was very palatable. We ate it on bread and on flapjacks.

Our staple diet was mainly corn bread and mush and molasses. We had fried fat pork and boiled potatoes frequently; and when we kept a cow, we had milk with our corn-meal dishes—a combination that is hard to beat. Whatever Mother cooked tasted good, and her stewed fruits were delicious. Sometimes she let us have skim milk to drink if the pigs didn't need it more than we did. She used the cream for butter, and we children did the churning in an up-and-down wooden churn.

She made two kinds of cheese—a full milk cheese that was wonderful, and a skim-milk cheese that wasn't bad to taste, but was the toughest blamed thing you ever saw. You could break a brick on

it, or make a sole for your shoe out of it. However, cheese of any kind was a rarity and a luxury in our house. One old cow wouldn't supply us with much, and we were a hungry family. Mother allowanced us on butter. Mostly we had molasses instead of butter on our bread, and we used fried pork fat on both bread and potatoes.

We always had quite a garden in which we raised potatoes, beets, carrots, sweet corn, and other vegetables. But we didn't do real farming to amount to anything, and never grew a surplus to sell.

Mother was a great one for making apple and pumpkin pies. She made custard pies, too, but not often, because they took eggs, and eggs could be sold. She used to dry apples and pumpkins. After the apples had been peeled, cored, and sliced she'd run a cotton string through the pieces and hang them up to dry. The pumpkins had to be pared and sliced and strung, too, and the scallops of drying apples and pumpkins were hung one below another in the kitchen all round the room. Of course, the flies would light on them, but that didn't matter. They were washed before they were made into sauce and pies.

Tea was a necessity to my mother, but she made it go as far as possible. She'd steep it two or three times, then take the tea leaves and dry them, and afterward boil them to get out the last bit of flavor. Father also drank tea. It wasn't supposed to be good for young folks, and we children never drank it unless we had a headache. Wherever we

moved, there was always a cider mill in the neighborhood, and when sweet cider was available we'd fill up on that.

Blackberries were wonderfully plentiful, and there were lots of red raspberries and wild strawberries. The place that excelled all others for blackberries centred round a ledge on a pasture hill and covered a tract about two hundred feet wide and a quarter of a mile long. It was a neighborhood resort, and the berries were particularly big and soft and luscious. Both blackberries and raspberries seemed to thrive among the rocks and along the waysides and fences. Strawberries grew everywhere. There were two kinds, one was round in shape and grew only in the open. The other was long or pear-shaped and preferred the seclusion of the tall grass.

We used to tap the sugar-maple trees in the early spring when the thawing weather came. A forehanded farmer would carry a kettle to the woods and boil down the sap there. We were not forehanded. We just tapped a few trees, and brought the sap home and boiled it on the stove.

I didn't have a pair of shoes until I was thirteen years old. In winter I sometimes tied old bags round my feet when I was going out to help in the barn. If the weather was very cold I had to stay in the house. But because my feet never had had any covering they got so accustomed to the cold that they could endure a good deal of frost without great inconvenience.

Lack of shoes didn't prevent my going to school, except in the very severest weather; and my two younger brothers went with me, no better shod. We could go on the hard snow and ice much better than we could through a light snow, because the light snow would get up inside our trousers on our bare legs, which couldn't stand it so well as our feet. The way we managed was to run with all our might as long as our feet could endure the cold, and them climb up on a fence, or sit down on a boulder or a stump, and rub our feet and ankles with our hands; and then we'd rush on again.

One winter we had a big thaw that was followed by a sudden freeze; and the snow, which still lay deep over the fields, was covered with a sheet of glare ice firm enough to bear a person up. While things were in this condition, my brother Sam and I, after we had gone to bed on a bright moonlight evening, looked out of the window, and were greatly tempted by that slippery crust. So we crawled out and ran around in our shirt-tails for a while, sliding on our bare feet. But we soon got our fill of joy and had started to return to the house, when, lo and behold, there was Ma'am standing at the window with a switch in her hand. We hesitated between staying out and shivering, or going in to be warmed up by that switch. We decided that we preferred a thrashing, and we got it.

The only hat I ever had until I was quite a big boy was a little fancy straw one with a ribbon on

it that my brother Hiram gave me when I was about seven years old. I was tickled to death and treasured it as a choice possession.

Mother made cloth caps for us—made them out of any old thing she might have—and she put flaps on the caps to come down over our ears. The flaps had wool or fur on the under side, and they had strings on them that we tied under our chins. Occasionally she made us a cap of muskrat skins lined with cloth. She used to knit woolen mufflers for us, but we didn't have them often.

I wore a heavy flannel shirt in winter. Mother spun the wool, wove the cloth, and made the shirt. It usually was dyed a gray color with a dye she made from copperas and white maple bark stewed in a big kettle. In summer I wore a cotton shirt of blue drilling, and the rest of my summer clothing was trousers with sometimes a jacket.

Now and then my mother or my sisters knit us boys a pair of mittens. But for the most part we had cloth mittens, the material for which Mother cut from an old pair of trousers or other worn-out garments. She often lined them with woolly sheepskin.

District Schooldays

The last summer that we lived in East Dover I began going to school. I was half-past eight years old. Most children went to school when they were four or five, but not in our family. Perhaps we didn't have suitable clothes. You see, we were so poor that we went round almost naked.

I was anxious to learn my letters, and was glad when school opened that summer and I could go. Eliza and Sam went with me, and it was a memorable day for all three. In the first place, our hands and faces were washed before we were allowed to start from home. This was a strange and curious proceeding that we thought entirely unnecessary. A splendid dinner was put up for us. It consisted of crackers and cheese, and real crackers were a luxury then. My sister had charge of the dinner pail; but Sam and I were suspicious, and we watched her vigilantly from our distant seats to see that she didn't get at that dinner before we had a chance to share it. The girls had their recess before the boys did, and when they went out, Eliza took the precious dinner pail with her. She didn't dare to leave it behind lest Sam and I should get possession of it. He and I didn't know the ways of the school. We thought that dinner time had come when we saw Eliza making off with the pail of cheese and crackers, and we couldn't understand why we weren't liberated, too. We wouldn't take any chances; so up we got and ran and caught hold of her.

The teacher interceded. She said Eliza was only going out to recess, and would soon return, and that then we and the other boys could have our recess. But we wouldn't trust Eliza alone with that precious dinner pail; and at the teacher's suggestion she returned to her seat and lost her recess.

When our turn came, we were told that we could

go out and play, but we wouldn't leave "them crackers," and we held the fort until noon.

I went to school bookless, but after a few days the teacher took pity on me and gave me a primer. My mother had told me to be careful not to get a black mark, and I certainly behaved the best I knew how. When, however, I had advanced so that the teacher gave me a reading lesson in words of two letters, she marked the place in the primer with a pencil. I was struck with consternation—she had given me a black mark —and as soon as I was back in my seat I wet my finger and rubbed the mark out, nearly making a hole in the paper, and leaving a nasty daub in the new book. Later I went out to read, and the teacher took me to task for injuring the pretty book. I explained that I didn't want any black marks set down against me, and she was much amused.

The schoolhouse was on a hill at a crossroads a half mile or more from the village. It was a little old one-room building that stood on a corner close to the highway. At some remote period it had been painted red, and splotches of the color still clung to the weatherworn clapboards. Inside, the walls were plastered, but the laths showed in places where the plaster had been knocked off. The room was warmed by a round, cast-iron stove. The pupils' desk and seats were made of unpainted pine boards, and we used to cut our initials and all kinds of figures in the soft wood, which, as time went on, became more and more grimy and ink-stained. Two always sat in a seat. The

teacher's desk was the same shape as those of the children, but bigger, and it was on a platform like a throne. She had a chair instead of a bench for a seat.

. . . The large boys had to take turns making the schoolhouse fire. The fire would go out during the night; and Lord! how cold that schoolroom would be when the fire-maker arrived on a winter morning! Another job of his was to shovel paths when there had been a snowstorm, or the snow had been drifted by the wind—oh, bless you, yes! you couldn't get anywhere if paths weren't shoveled.

For drinking water we'd fill a wooden pail at a spring or stream, or at a neighbor's well. Then we'd lug it into the schoolroom, and somebody would pass the water round in a long-handled dipper that would hold about a pint. Occasionally some of the boys would see who could drink the most. I remember I drank a quart once. We did that sort of thing out of pure cussedness. If we could drink the water up so there wasn't enough to go round, a couple of us would have the chance to go out and get the air while we went after another pailful.

When a boy misbehaved or didn't get his lessons, he might be made to stand in a corner facing the wall to do his studying; or he might be sent to sit with the girls. That was pretty severe on a modest, bashful boy.

But the principal punishment was what was called feruling, although the implement the teacher

used was a long, round pointer that generally served the purpose of pointing at things on the blackboard. You'd stand on the floor and hold out your hand, and she'd lick you across your palm and fingers with that pointer. Sometimes, we'd have to go out and cut a switch for her to use instead of the pointer. The lickings were just the normal, old-fashioned way of disciplining the youngsters at school, which now, sadly, has gone out of date. There's so much sentimentality on the subject of punishment that no way is left to enforce law and order effectively in the schoolroom.

I dearly loved to go to school, and when I heard about boys playing truant I never could understand it. Precious hours they were that I spent at school. I always made the maximum use of my time, and considered the teacher a friend. Well, I did throw spit-balls—no boy could forbear doing that; but even in the matter of spit-balls I was better behaved than most of the boys. My object in going to school was to learn what I could, and I didn't want anything to interfere with that object.

The first book I bought was a geography. I was about twelve years old. My father had been entertaining us with soul-stirring tales of Napoleon and my school-teacher had said that I was getting to be a big boy and ought to know something about geography. The thought that a geography would tell me something about France, the country of Napoleon, stimulated my desire to get one. Then my opportunity came—my father offered

me five cents a day to work at haying for Deacon Bartlett. I helped spread the grass to dry, helped rake up the hay, helped load the wagon, and, finally, helped stow the hay away in the barn. I was barefoot, and there were lots of thistles in that hay, and though my feet were tough the work was painful. But I thought of the geography and braved the thistles.

At the week's end I received my pay—thirty cents—and I hurried to Upper Abbot as hard as I could run. There I bought a beautiful geography. It was a wonder, and it cost just thirty cents. Then back I started for home, again running for all I was worth, but as soon as I got out of the village I turned aside into a pasture, climbed on to a big rock, and sat down to hunt in my precious book for France where Napoleon lived.

Napoleon was my first and foremost hero. He still attracts me. I consider him the highest point at which Nature has arrived in producing a potential, executive, intellectual complex. He is the great human dynamo in the history of mankind. No other man ever did so much with the same means.

It was a great puzzle to me, as the years went on, to decide what kind of knowledge would be of most value to me, because I was uncertain what calling to take up for my life work. There was a while when I thought I'd like to be a lawyer. But my father told me that lawyers had to be awfully good at arithmetic. That was my hard study. Besides, I heard my home folks talk about "Dis-

mal Fractions." I hadn't got to decimals then, and I took their words literally. It seemed evident that the law wasn't the calling for me.

I studied Greenleaf's Arithmetic. We rubbed up together a good deal—that old arithmetic and I. I have it now, and it shows plainly that there was a good deal of attrition between us. Really, I didn't have much aptitude for arithmetic, just the same as I didn't have much aptitude for spelling, although by hard study I got to be proficient in both. Everything else came easy, and I was particularly strong in English and sentence construction. Lord! I walked away with grammar. No special effort was required even to commit the rules to memory. I can repeat them now. I didn't need to exert myself any to learn geography. Neither did I to learn history. Oh, I loved history! I could take a history, and when I had read it through I knew it all.

We used to practise writing on slates. We couldn't afford to buy paper and lead pencils. The teacher set the copy for us. Erasing was done by simply spitting on the slates and rubbing out the marks with one's sleeve. But I think some used a rag.

. . . The year that I was thirteen my uncle Amos came to our house one day and told us there was to be a private school in the Upper Abbot district schoolhouse. It was to run for three months, and was to be kept by a young woman who had an excellent reputation as a teacher. He said it was a pity that so bright a boy as I seemed to be

shouldn't have a better chance to get an education; and he offered to pay for my tuition and books. He was quite a chap, Uncle Amos was.

His offer was accepted, and this was the only help I ever received toward getting an education, except the primer that was given to me by my first teacher.

HUDSON MAXIM.

DECEMBER 6 AND 7

THE LOVELIEST THING*

CHARACTERS

THE HUSBAND
THE WIFE
THE CHILD, *a girl*
THE WIFE'S FATHER
THE WIFE'S MOTHER
MAM'ZELLE
THE MAN WHO WASN'T EXPECTED
THE VOICES OF THE CHRISTMAS SPIRITS

The scene is the morning room of a well-to-do family; the time is Christmas Day at noon.

The curtain rises to the sound of distant bells and the near-by singing of carols:

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the Feast of Stephen.

It is a comfortable but rather pretentious room with double doors at back which lead to a dining room. When these are open one sees a table splendidly arrayed with Christmas fare. There is another door leading to the rest of the house, in the angle of the right and back wall. Between these two doors

*By permission of the author.

is a buffet laden with cold dishes—a mighty turkey, mince pies, a Christmas pudding, crackers, and so on. There is a fireplace down right, with a small settee above it. There is a table down left that bears a Christmas tree decorated with toys and unlit candles. A window in the left wall shows a frosty street. From a center chandelier hangs a great branch of mistletoe, and a huge bough of holly is tucked into a picture frame above the mantelpiece. Chairs are dotted about, on one of which lies a folded newspaper. The carol singing continues:

And the snow lay round about,
Cold and crisp and even.

THE FATHER'S VOICE. Don't make that infernal row, I tell you.

[*A door slams; silence. A clock strikes twelve. A narrow ray of intense white light is thrown upon the holly and a voice rings out, sharp and clear, from the very center of the bough.—See note to the producer, on page 146.*]

HOLLY. Well, all you Christmas things, what news?

[*A second shaft of light is thrown on the mistletoe.*]

MISTLETOE. Who spoke?

HOLLY. Holly. That you, old Mistletoe?

MISTLETOE [*grumblingly*]. Who do you think?

HOLLY. Keep your berries on.

MISTLETOE. Ah-h!

HOLLY. What's amiss? Haven't you scored?

MISTLETOE. I look like scoring, don't I? And yet my cousin, who was cut from the same orchard —exhibited in the same shop—my cousin——

HOLLY. Well?

MISTLETOE. He was brought by a young couple who had to borrow coppers from each other to pay the price. Yes, and the man tucked a sprig of my cousin in the girl's hat and kissed her before they reached the street.

HOLLY. I was there—saw him do it. But you've been bought, too.

MISTLETOE. Bought! Ordered over the telephone! Me! And last night the husband and wife—you know.

HOLLY. I know. He said "Blast the stuff" when she asked him to nail me up.

MISTLETOE. The pair of them sat underneath me last night.

HOLLY. Did they? Did you do any good?

MISTLETOE. Oh, a lot. They had a row, my boy. That's all the good I did.

HOLLY. It's impossible to believe it.

[*Another ray of light is thrown on the turkey.*]

TURKEY. I could believe anything of folks who eat me *cold* on a Christmas Day just to save 'emselves trouble. What the gobble-gobble do they imagine I've been putting on fat for since last Michaelmas! 'Pon my soul, it makes me wish I'd never been killed.

MISTLETOE. Wish I'd never been cut.

HOLLY. So do I. And I fancied I was in for a romantic future. A song thrush built her nest in

me last spring and brought up such a nice family.

TURKEY. *Cold* turkey. I ask you! Cold. Gobble-gobble-gobble.

[*A ray of light strikes the Christmas pudding.*]

PUDDING [*roundly*]. Do not employ the word cold in my hearing. When I inform you that my suet has gone white with shame you will understand why. I was made from a recipe that has been in the family for five generations—the only perfect recipe in England—and yet—Crumbs and Raisins! It makes me heavy to think of it!

HOLLY. Sounds a stirring story.

PUDDING. Precisely. No one but the child and Mam'zelle bothered to stir me. But there is worse to come. Did any one put a thimble in my inside—an anchor—a button, or even a threepenny bit? Not they. I tell you, I haven't a New Year prophecy in me. [*The light flickers up and down on the dish of mince pies, from whence comes a titter of laughter.*] All right, you mince pies, laugh away. I suppose you imagine you will be handing out happy months just as usual, but if I know aught of your crust eaten cold, you'll be responsible for acutely painful half hours beforehand.

HOLLY. Well, well. It's all very sad; the most we can do is to hope for the best and hang on till Twelfth Night.

[*The rays of light die away and again the carols sing*:

God bless the master of this house
And bless the mistress too.]

THE FATHER'S VOICE. Don't want your blessings. Take 'em away.

AN URCHIN'S VOICE. They wasn't fer you; they was fer the 'ouse nex' door.

THE FATHER'S VOICE. Well, be off; clear off.

CAROL SINGERS. Yah!

[*The door up right opens and* MAM'ZELLE, *a sweet English girl of twenty, and* LUCY. *the child, a little girl of about ten, come in.*]

MAM'ZELLE. You mustn't touch anything, but you may look.

CHILD [*nodding and looking around wonderingly*]. That's Holly. He's got red berries. Why?

MAM'ZELLE. Because people pricked their fingers on him when the world was a baby, and the little beads of blood clustered together to be a warning.

CHILD. Shall we light the Christmas tree?

MAM'ZELLE. Oh, no, no. What would Grandpa say? See! [*Opening double doors.*] You may look at the table.

CHILD [*looking through door*]. Oh-h-h!

[*Enter the wife's mother, a fat, kindly, rather common old thing of sixty. She is dressed in silk, but wears an apron and overall sleeves. She is tired, fussed, and rather harassed.*]

CHILD. And where will I sit?

MAM'ZELLE. That depends.

MOTHER [*putting some silver on the sideboard*]. She must have her dinner upstairs as usual, Mam'zelle.

CHILD. But, Grannie——

MOTHER. Upstairs with Mam'zelle, dear.

[MAM'ZELLE *opens her mouth to protest.*] Now, please don't argue. Mr. Rosmer doesn't like children at table. It would save me trouble if you both had your dinner here with no servants in the house; but no one considers me. I'll give you some fruit and things to take up.

[*Enters dining room with a plate.*]

MAM'ZELLE. It's all right, Lucy; we'll have the loveliest party, we two.

CHILD [*nods, looks up, and sees mistletoe*]. What's that?

MAM'ZELLE. Mistletoe.

CHILD. What's it for?

MAM'ZELLE [*stooping and kissing her*]. This.

[*Enter the wife's father, a fine-looking old town bird, with bushy eyebrows and rather a testy manner. There is a touch of the parvenu about him, a purse-proud quality.*]

FATHER. 'Ullo, 'ullo! Slip upstairs and play with your new toys.

MAM'ZELLE. We were just——

MOTHER [*entering with a plate of fruit*]. There! Will three crackers be enough?

MAM'ZELLE. It isn't very many [*turning to* FATHER *for support*]. And I like crackers myself.

MOTHER. Take the box, then. And do not stand under the mistletoe when you're speaking to Mr. Rosmer, Mam'zelle.

MAM'ZELLE. I'm sorry.

[*She and* LUCY *go out with the plate of fruit and the box of paper crackers.*]

MOTHER [*exhaustedly*]. Oh, dear me! I hope

that's all. Tired out I am with running up and down stairs.

FATHER. Can't think why they call that girl "Mam'zelle." English, ain't she?

MOTHER. They got into the way of it, I suppose. Lucy has had so many French governesses. Does it matter?

FATHER. It doesn't; but if she has a name, pity not to use it. No good pretending a girl's French when she ain't—trouble enough when she is.

MOTHER. It's Mary's business, not ours.

FATHER. This is a poor fire.

MOTHER. Well, you can put on some coal.

FATHER. Can't be bothered. Hate messing with coal. Like to ring a bell.

MOTHER. A bell's no good unless there's a servant at the end of it.

FATHER. Well, if you hadn't filled up the house with people and children p'raps the servants would 'a' stayed.

MOTHER. And I wouldn't like to have heard what you would have said if our own child and her husband hadn't been asked for Christmas.

FATHER. A nice thing for a man in my position to be without servants. What the deuce is the good of money and a big position when one's treated like this by the lower classes? Whole lot skedaddling on Christmas Eve. I don't know what the nation is coming to.

MOTHER. It's been worse for me than for you.

FATHER. Think I want to see you in apron and sleeves?

MOTHER. Someone had to get things ready.

FATHER. I want to know when I'll get a hot bath again.

MOTHER. I've far too much on my hands now to be lighting fires in the morning.

FATHER. Washing myself in half a basin of lukewarm water!

MOTHER. It's a pity you can't say something nice about what I have done, instead of grumbling about what I've no intention of doing.

FATHER. Ach, ptsh!

MOTHER. I will not have that noise made at me.

FATHER. That'll do; that'll do.

MOTHER. I can't think why you didn't go down to the country and stay with Ned. Satisfied with nothing.

FATHER. Don't like Ned.

MOTHER. Yes, you do.

FATHER. And I don't like the country. Too many confounded trees about.

MOTHER [*suddenly beginning to weep*]. Oh, I wish my boy were here. I wish my boy were here.

FATHER. Now, then; now, then.

MOTHER. It was different when he was here. Christmas meant something then.

FATHER. Stop it; stop it. Bless us, Mother! Crying like that!

MOTHER. And not so much as a word to say how he is. And you—you——

FATHER. What's wrong with me?

MOTHER. I'm going to lie down.

[*She hurries from the room.*]

FATHER [*pacing up and down*]. Pah! Ptss! [*Stops and surveys sideboard.*] Cold puddin'—beastly! [*Picks up newspaper and throws it aside.*] Yesterday's. Boo! [*Crosses to mantelpiece and looks at a photograph.*] Well, Tom, my son, hope it's better in Australia than it is here; that's all.

[*Enter his daughter, the* WIFE, *a pretty but cold-looking woman of thirty.*]

WIFE. What's the matter with Mother?

FATHER. Don't ask me. Only been married thirty-five years. How should I know? Gone to lie down. Fagged out after all these blasted preparations.

WIFE. She was crying.

FATHER. Thinking of your brother did that. See if I can't get a paper outside. Might find an appetite for this cold stuff.

WIFE [*looking through double doors into the carefully arranged dining room*]. How silly of Mother to lay the table. I was going to do that.

FATHER. H'm! You gave her plenty of time to get it done first.

WIFE. I was writing letters.

FATHER. No hot bath—no servants—nice state of things! [*He goes out.*]

[*The* WIFE *goes to the fireplace humming a chilly air and holds out her hands to the fire. The* HUSBAND *enters. He is a nice-looking man of thirty-odd years. His expression is rather tragic. He pauses awkwardly on seeing his wife. Their*

eyes meet, and she sits on a sofa and picks up a magazine. He takes out a cigar and crosses to the table D. L. for a match. He strikes one.]

WIFE [*without looking up*]. Mother doesn't like smoke in the room before a meal.

HUSBAND [*blows out match and returns cigar to his case*]. I remember.

WIFE. Thank you.

HUSBAND [*coming toward her and speaking with great determination*]. Mary.

WIFE. Please don't let us begin it all over again.

HUSBAND. I have no intention of doing so. I merely have to say that I've thought over your suggestion.

WIFE. Yes?

HUSBAND. And if you find it impossible to believe——

WIFE [*ironically*]. Obvious falsehoods.

HUSBAND [*firmly*]. Obvious truths.

WIFE. Such as——

HUSBAND. My affection for you.

WIFE. I do.

HUSBAND. Then I think it best we should separate.

WIFE. Just as you wish. [*Enter* MAM'ZELLE.]

HUSBAND. As every sort of love and trust seems to have gone by the board, separation is the only course open to us.

MAM'ZELLE. I beg your pardon.

WIFE [*turning sharply*]. Why don't you knock, Mam'zelle?

MAM'ZELLE. I'm sorry. Lucy wants so much to have dinner with you, and I thought——

WIFE. She would annoy Father.

MAM'ZELLE. No, I'm sure——

HUSBAND. Tell her I'll look into the nursery and——

MAM'ZELLE. Be Father Christmas.

HUSBAND. Not this year; I haven't the things.

MAM'ZELLE. She would have been good, you know.

WIFE. It's no use discussing it. And by the by, Mam'zelle, I'm afraid I must give you notice. My husband and myself are making arrangements which——

MAM'ZELLE. Notice! To-day! I'm—sorry. [*Enter* MOTHER, *followed by* FATHER.]

MOTHER. As we're all here we may as well begin.

FATHER. Let's get at it and be done with it.

MOTHER. There! After all the trouble I've taken.

WIFE [*suddenly*]. Mother, I——

HUSBAND [*quickly*]. Not now, Mary; this is hardly the time.

WIFE. Perhaps you are right.

MOTHER. What's the matter with every one?

WIFE. We—we've lost something, that's all.

FATHER. Don't expect me to join in a hunt. Can't bear poking about.

HUSBAND. It isn't anything we are in the least likely to find.

MOTHER. What have they lost, Mam'zelle?

MAM'ZELLE [*with eyes looking fixedly out before her*]. One of the loveliest things in the world.

MOTHER [*to* WIFE]. Not your brooch, dear?

MAM'ZELLE. No, it isn't that.

FATHER. Speak up, girl; what is it?

MAM'ZELLE. The Christmas spirit.

ALL. The Christmas spirit!

MAM'ZELLE. Yes—yes.

[*They stand looking at the girl in amazement, when from the distance come the sound of shouts and the jingle of sleigh bells. They come nearer and nearer, and then there is a thunderous attack on the knocker.*]

WIFE. Whoever is that?

MOTHER. Father, do you think it could possibly be——

FATHER. Tss! The boy's in Australia, ain't he?

MAM'ZELLE. Sleigh bells.

HUSBAND. Someone might go to the door.

WIFE. Certainly not.

MOTHER. Mam'zelle!

MAM'ZELLE. Of course. [*She runs off.*]

WIFE. Were you expecting——

MOTHER. No one.

FATHER. I do hope it ain't——

HUSBAND. Listen.

[*A murmur of voices and once again the jingle of approaching bells.* MAM'ZELLE *comes in, flushed and excited.*]

MAM'ZELLE [*with happy enthusiasm*]. I must get busy; it's Santa Claus.

WIFE. Mam'zelle.

FATHER. The girl's a fool.

AN OLD MAN'S VOICE. These stairs, these stairs! Chimneys are better——

[THE MAN WHO WASN'T EXPECTED *appears in the doorway, dressed as Santa Claus in scarlet cloth and white fur. He has bushy eyebrows and beard, and a pink, jovial countenance. He carries a sack.*]

THE MAN. Every time give me a chimney. [*Drops bag.*] Ah-h-h! A Merry Christmas, everyone. [*His voice suddenly changes and becomes very young.*] Hullo! Where are all the kids?

FATHER. What the deuce are you doing, mountebanking in my house?

[MAM'ZELLE *make a half gesture to silence him.*]

THE MAN. My cloak is my passport, sir. On this day of days I may walk into the million houses of the million people and find a welcome.

HUSBAND. But who are you?

THE MAN [*pointing to* MAM'ZELLE]. She knows.

WIFE. Is this some friend of yours, Mam'zelle?

MAM'ZELLE. I am sure it is.

WIFE. How dare you ask——

THE MAN. She didn't. I came unasked. All places are alike to me.

MOTHER. But we didn't expect——

THE MAN. How can you say that, with this [*pointing to Mistletoe*] and that [*pointing to Holly*] and this [*indicating the Christmas tree*] waiting to welcome me? Didn't expect me with a sideboard groaning with my special fare. Crackers, too! Why, you have even parked artillery to fire my

grand salute. [*Takes cracker and offers end to the* FATHER.] Come, sir, one with you!

FATHER. What the dickens are you playing at?

THE MAN. Pull it; pull it! There may be a paper crown inside. Have you no taste for Christmas royalty? [*To* MAM'ZELLE.] One with you then. [*Pulls cracker with* MAM'ZELLE.]

MOTHER [*in a warning whisper*]. Mam'zelle, restrain yourself.

THE MAN. There's a suggestion from someone standing beneath my principal spell. [*Points at Mistletoe and kisses* MOTHER *vigorously.*]

MOTHER. Well, I never!

FATHER. You'd better look out, sir; that's my wife. If there's going to be any kissing in this house——

THE MAN. You're the man for the job.

FATHER. I've a good mind to kick you down the stairs.

MOTHER. I don't think he meant any harm, Father!

FATHER. Meant any harm!

MOTHER. He was carried away, that's all.

FATHER. Brazen hussy! She liked it.

THE MAN. Of course she did. What's it there for if not to be used?

WIFE. I really would not argue with him, Father.

FATHER. Exactly. We've had enough of this tomfoolery, and the sooner you go, the better.

THE MAN. You surely don't want to get rid of me?

MOTHER [*kindly*]. Not if there's any reason why you should stay.

THE MAN. I could name a dozen reasons.

WIFE. Do so.

THE MAN. Well, that's an awful attractive turkey, and I'm morally sure that Christmas pudding is cram-jam full of wedding bells and rings and three-penny bits——

MOTHER [*aghast*]. There! If I didn't forget to put anything in the pudding!

THE MAN. I knew it! I knew there was something wrong with you all!

HUSBAND. Do you mean you are hungry?

THE MAN [*with forced gaiety*]. Yes, rather! I'd be ashamed to be anything else on Christmas Day.

FATHER. And you broke in here to get yourself a meal.

THE MAN. One of your bells is labeled "Visitors" and I thought it meant me.

FATHER. Be good enough to take yourself off, sir, at once.

MAM'ZELLE. No, no, you shan't. I asked him to come.

MOTHER. You?

MAM'ZELLE. This man is my—my brother, and I *told* him to come. You can give him my dinner. I don't want any.

THE MAN. I say—I say—I say.

MAM'ZELLE. He's my brother. He had nowhere to go, and nothing to eat, so—so——

THE MAN. Come here at once, you good bad

little girl. It's very wicked to tell stories on Christmas Day, and I'm not hungry enough to let you take the blame. But you were a brick to have thought of it. Makes me glad I'm not your brother. Name, please.

MAM'ZELLE. Nellie Martell.

THE MAN. Martell. I shall remember by the two stars. [*He turns to the company.*] My lords and ladies, I humbly take my leave. Though for the life of me, I can't see why the person of old Santa Claus is unwelcome to you. [*To* MOTHER:] Your fault, perhaps, for neglecting to put trinkets in the pudding. It's an omission you should remedy. Good-bye, everyone. I'll leave you a yule log that I cut myself and brought back all the way from Australia. [*Empties a log from his sack and turns to the door.*]

MOTHER. Wait! Father! Australia! Oh, why didn't you say you came from our Tom?

THE MAN. I didn't. I came from somebody else's Sydney.

FATHER. If you're from our son——

THE MAN. But I'm not.

FATHER. Then why——

THE MAN. I arrived in England late last night —worked my passage and landed with two pounds in my pocket and the suit I stand up in.

HUSBAND. Hardly that.

THE MAN. Underneath. It was deuced cold, and I wanted an overcoat; but all the big stores were closed. Quite by accident I happened to see this outfit in the window of a sweet-stuff shop.

Being warm and seasonable, I bought it. Only fifteen bob, with the beard thrown in. Tremendous saving in neckties, these. I blew in the rest of my capital on a sack of toys.

MOTHER. What for?

THE MAN. You can't walk around this time of the year, masquerading as old man Santa Claus, with nothing to give away.

MAM'ZELLE. Children followed you.

THE MAN [*nods*]. Last night was wonderful. I had a go round some of the mean streets. D'you know, five perfectly good mothers let me creak upstairs and fill their youngsters' stockings. I tell you, made me feel like the real article! The grubby little rooms, the sleeping kids, the rattle of traffic outside and the socks and stockings, dirty little articles of faith hanging to the bed rail, waiting to be filled.

MOTHER [*gently*]. You must be a very nice man.

[*The* WIFE *has turned away and is looking into the fire.*]

FATHER [*huskily*]. Did you come here with the intention of filling my stocking?

THE MAN. To tell the truth, I came for sanctuary. My bag was empty, you see, and as I rounded your corner I was spotted by some carol singers. Rather than disappoint them, I made a bolt for it. [*To* MOTHER:] If you would spare me half-a-dozen oranges and a few raisins I'd take to the streets again, but I'm dead frightened of facing the world again with empty pockets.

FATHER. Take what you want.

MOTHER. Father. [*She draws him aside and whispers.*]

HUSBAND. Mary, don't you think you might —— [*His voice drops.*]

WIFE [*coldly*]. It has nothing to do with me. [*She goes into dining room.* HUSBAND *watches her with his mouth set firm.*]

MOTHER [*to the* MAN]. Mr. Rosmer says, if you care to have a little something in here——

FATHER. Don't want to turn anybody away this time of year.

THE MAN. That's tremendously good of you.

MOTHER. He would ask you to join us, only ——

THE MAN. I wouldn't dream of invading a family party.

HUSBAND. I'm glad you have been persuaded to stay. You'll think we've been a little——

THE MAN. Not at all.

MOTHER. Mam'zelle'll look after you.

THE MAN. I'm more than favored.

MAM'ZELLE [*putting a chair by the table D. L.*]. Will you sit here?

THE MAN. Under the tree? Splendid!

MOTHER. I suppose you didn't come from our Tom?

THE MAN. You almost tempt me to tell a lie about it.

MOTHER [*with an air of resignation*]. It wasn't to be expected. Perhaps if I'd put the things in the Christmas pudding——

WIFE'S VOICE [*from dining room*]. Aren't we going to begin?

FATHER. Come along, Mother.

HUSBAND [*turning cordially to the* MAN]. Help yourself to whatever you want.

THE MAN [*heartily*]. You bet.

[HUSBAND, MOTHER, *and* FATHER *enter dining room and close door.* MAM'ZELLE *fetches some cutlery from the sideboard.*]

MAM'ZELLE. It was bad of me to pretend you were my brother.

THE MAN. Are you sorry you did?

MAM'ZELLE. No.

THE MAN. Nor am I. Things like that don't happen very often.

MAM'ZELLE. You can't eat in that beard, can you?

THE MAN. I may be concealing a hare lip. [*Takes off beard.*] There! I'll risk it.

MAM'ZELLE. You're quite young. [*He is only thirty and is really very good-looking.*]

THE MAN. Sorry to destroy an illusion.

MAM'ZELLE. You haven't done that.

THE MAN. Good.

MAM'ZELLE [*impulsively*]. Haven't you any money?

THE MAN. In my pockets—not a sou.

MAM'ZELLE. Would you be offended if——

THE MAN. Very.

MAM'ZELLE. It would be only a little.

THE MAN. Even a little is too much. I'm poor on purpose.

MAM'ZELLE. On purpose?

THE MAN. Um! To see what it feels like. I'll be a Crœsus when the banks open.

MAM'ZELLE. I don't understand.

THE MAN. It's a bet. I put my money out of reach and put myself to reach it.

MAM'ZELLE. That's why you worked your passage?

THE MAN. That's why I've done all sorts of things these last four years.

MAM'ZELLE. Who did you bet with?

THE MAN. Myself.

MAM'ZELLE. You can't do that.

THE MAN. Oh, yes, you can. My rich self, who is a lazy, take-it-for-granted kind of feller, betted my poor self that he couldn't get on without my rich self.

MAM'ZELLE. Who won?

THE MAN. My poor self.

MAM'ZELLE. But you're going back to your rich self.

THE MAN. As a victor. To dictate terms.

MAM'ZELLE. And what will you do with the lazy, take-it-for-granted fellow?

THE MAN. Teach him how to work.

[*The door opens and the* CHILD *peeps in.*]

MAM'ZELLE. Quick, your beard!

[*He puts it back and turns. The* CHILD *enters a pace or two into the room and stands, open-mouthed.*]

CHILD. Santa Claus!

THE MAN. At your service.

CHILD. You have come to——

THE MAN. Invite you to dine with me.

CHILD [*to* MAM'ZELLE]. Does he mean it?

MAM'ZELLE. He means it.

CHILD. Is he real?

MAM'ZELLE. As real as fairies.

CHILD. Will he let me light the tree?

THE MAN. Of course. On you go.

[*She lights the candles on the tree. The* MAN *turns to* MAM'ZELLE.]

THE MAN. Grandfather won't object, I'm sure. He looked a fine old chap.

MAM'ZELLE. He could be.

THE MAN. What's wrong with him?

MAM'ZELLE. There are no servants in the house. They left yesterday.

THE MAN. A cold buffet. I might have guessed.

MAM'ZELLE. He misses his hot bath.

THE MAN. Nothing can be done for him, unless we light the stove.

CHILD. Shall I really have dinner here?

THE MAN. Yes. You and me and Mam'zelle. [*To* MAM'ZELLE:] What's the old lady missing?

MAM'ZELLE. A son abroad, and no letters in the post bag this morning.

CHILD. Shall we have crackers?

THE MAN. You bet we shall. [*To* MAM'ZELLE:] The old lady's a dear, isn't she?

MAM'ZELLE. She might be.

THE MAN. Who prepared all this?

MAM'ZELLE. She did.

THE MAN. She *is* a dear. I'm glad I kissed her under the mistletoe.

MAM'ZELLE. She was glad. [*He sits on a chair and rises quickly.*]

THE MAN. Ouch!

MAM'ZELLE. What is it?

THE MAN. Felt like a pin. No, it's an anchor. The anchor of a child's ship. The symbol of hope. Have you any pluck?—but I know you have. Stick it in the pudding.

MAM'ZELLE. Ah yes.

[*She takes it and goes to the pudding, screening what she does from the audience.*]

THE MAN. You believe in things?

MAM'ZELLE. Tremendously.

CHILD. What's she doing with the pudding?

THE MAN. Making tradition.

CHILD. What's tradition?

THE MAN. Holly is, and mistletoe. Jack in the green, and Maypole. Christmas is tradition, and crackers are.

CHILD. And Christmas pudding?

THE MAN. I should think it is.

CHILD. Tell me.

THE MAN [*to* MAM'ZELLE]. Put it on this chair.

[MAM'ZELLE *brings over the pudding and puts it on a chair in the center of stage, where it is picked up with a ray of light.*]

THE MAN. There. What does it remind you of?

CHILD. It's round, like the world.

THE MAN. It stands for the world, and the four corners of the earth that go to the making of it.

CHILD. Tell me.

THE MAN. From all over the world come the bits and things, the goods and candies that make up this happy, jolly, round old pudding we are going to eat to-day. Canadian wheat, lying over in the wind and yellowing in the sun. Currants from Corinthian vines, that grow from green to purple, that swell and shrink and shrivel, and wrinkled raisins from Valencian slopes. Way, far away, from the West Indies comes sugar from the rattling canes. In Australia oranges ripen, and lemons too, patches of gold and saffron against the dead blue sky. They cut the peel, you know, and dry it, soak it in sirup and send it back in boxes for our Christmas pudding. Spices from the East. Almonds from Algiers, and suet from the rich, fat herds that graze along the banks of the River Plate. From all the corners of the earth they come, these fruits and seeds and essences—by rail, by ship, by caravan—a mighty conspiracy of all the peoples of the earth, each to make some offering, great or small, to this fat, round, jolly old pudding we're going to eat to-day.

CHILD. But why do they put bells and buttons and things inside it? What are they for?

THE MAN. For? My dear! Those silver trinkets you talk of so lightly are the fortune tellers, the gipsies of the pudding. New Year promises that always come true. I know a poem:

There are mysteries in the pudding,
Mysteries wise as fairy lore,
That tell to each exactly
What the future holds in store.
A sixpence meaning riches,
Gold and silver piling high,
And a thimble for the spinster
Whom love's passed by.

There are mysteries in the pudding,
And promises as well—
A ring of silver for the bride.
A silver wedding bell;
Buttons for the bachelor
And, lest he grieve and mope,
There's an anchor hidden somewhere,
Meaning hope, hope, hope!

MAM'ZELLE [*thoughtfully*]. I had a thimble last year.

THE MAN. I've had an awful lot of buttons in my time.

[*A pause*—then——]

MAM'ZELLE AND THE MAN [*both together*]. I wonder——[*They laugh.*]

CHILD [*to* MAM'ZELLE]. Is he finished now?

MAM'ZELLE. I don't know. Why?

CHILD. I would like to play with that fairy on top of the tree.

THE MAN. You go ahead. [*To* MAM'ZELLE:] I wonder who will be this year's bride.

[*Enter the* HUSBAND *from the dining room, carrying three plates of turkey, and so on.*]

HUSBAND. Sorry to have kept you waiting. Hello, kid! How did you find your way here?

CHILD. I'm going to have dinner with Santa Claus.

THE MAN. You don't mind, do you?

HUSBAND. Course not. We would have taken the child in with us, but the old man's a trifle faddy, and things are—anyhow—to-day. Shout if there's anything you want.

THE MAN. I will.

HUSBAND. I feel a bit awkward, sticking you out here.

THE MAN. Don't name it.

HUSBAND. Seems such a—— Oh, well, never mind.

THE MAN. I say, forgive me; but is there anything I can do?

HUSBAND What do you mean?

THE MAN. I don't mean anything; it's just an offer.

HUSBAND. Thanks very much; 'fraid not. You see—oh, well——

[*He goes to the dining-room door, where he turns, clinking some money in his pocket. Presently he produces some silver.*]

THE MAN. If you don't mind.

HUSBAND. My dear chap, I wasn't thinking of that.

THE MAN. Sorry.

HUSBAND. It was—I was only looking for a threepenny bit.

[*He finds a threepenny bit among his change. Looks round a shade awkwardly, squares his shoulders,*

approaches the Christmas pudding and pushes it in at the side, then laughs somewhat awkwardly.]

HUSBAND. Silly idea, what!

THE MAN. A very good idea.

[*The* HUSBAND *goes out.*]

MAM'ZELLE [*to* CHILD]. Now, sit down. Are you going to cut it up yourself?

CHILD. Yes, please.

THE MAN. What's up with those two?

MAM'ZELLE. I think they are separating.

CHILD [*to the* MAN]. You sit next to me.

THE MAN. Yes, rather! [*To* MAM'ZELLE:] What the dickens for?

MAM'ZELLE. Squabbles—misunderstandings; that's all. Nothing real.

THE MAN. I see.

CHILD. Good turkey!

THE MAN. Don't forget the stuffing. [*To* MAM'ZELLE:] But he's such a nice chap. Her fault?

MAM'ZELLE. They just won't unbend.

THE MAN [*nods*]. How does it affect you?

CHILD. Why do turkeys have stuffing?

THE MAN. Everybody stuffs at Christmas. [*To* MAM'ZELLE.] How's it affect you?

MAM'ZELLE. I go.

THE MAN. Do you, indeed? I am glad.

MAM'ZELLE. Glad! Why?

THE MAN. You've been a Mam'zelle long enough.

[*Enter the* MOTHER.]

MOTHER. I just wanted to be sure you had everything.

THE MAN. I have indeed.

MOTHER. I don't know what you've done to my husband, Mister Santa Claus, but he's come over so affable. Insists now that Lucy should come and sit beside him.

LUCY. I don't want to.

THE MAN. You must want to. Every good child sits beside her grandfather. Come on, take your plate; in you slip, and p'r'aps he'll tell you the story of the Battle of Blenheim.

LUCY. You're not going away?

THE MAN. No fear. I will be about.

MOTHER, Mam'zelle, put a place for yourself beside her, so she behaves before Mr. Rosmer.

MAM'ZELLE [*rather sadly*]. Very well. Come, Lucy.

[*She and* LUCY *enter the dining room with their plates. The* MOTHER *goes to a small table below fireplace and rummages in a work basket for a thimble. The* MAN *removes his beard.*]

THE MAN. I know what you're looking for.

MOTHER. What then?

THE MAN. You can't do needlework at Christmas dinner.

MOTHER. I wasn't going to, and I'm not looking for anything.

THE MAN. No, you've found it.

MOTHER. And what have I found, pray?

THE MAN. A thimble.

MOTHER. How did you know?

THE MAN. Ah!

MOTHER. Well, as a matter of fact, it was a thimble.

THE MAN. And you were going to put it in the Christmas pudding.

MOTHER. Yes, I was.

THE MAN. I shouldn't. Who knows but it might come out on your daughter's plate?

MOTHER. Wouldn't matter if it did. She's married.

THE MAN. Yes, but you wouldn't like to see her a spinster again.

MOTHER. Why do you say that?

THE MAN. I don't know.

MOTHER. You're a strange man. Then I'll put in this little bell; I had a cat that used to wear it; and I'll put in this old curtain ring, too.

THE MAN. It's a certain wedding.

MOTHER [*putting things in pudding*]. I do wish you'd come from my boy.

THE MAN. What would you have done if I had?

MOTHER. I'd have asked you all sorts of questions about him.

THE MAN. Ask away, then.

MOTHER. But you don't even know Tom.

THE MAN. But I know the sort of things a mother likes to hear about her absent son.

MOTHER. That's just a game!

THE MAN. Games were invented to make us happy. Ask your questions.

MOTHER [*sitting*]. When did you see him last?

THE MAN. Seven weeks ago last Tuesday.

MOTHER. Where?

THE MAN. At Woolamaloo.

MOTHER. Woolamaloo! What a silly-sounding-place!

THE MAN. Jolly fine place.

MOTHER. What's it like?

THE MAN. Like the rest of Australia.

MOTHER. What sort of a house does he live in?

THE MAN. Oh, house, you know; bricks and mortar, slates and chimneys and floors and ceilings; all that sort of thing.

MOTHER. What sort of decorations has he got in his room?

THE MAN. Your picture on the mantelpiece in the sitting room, and in the bedroom your picture over his bed.

MOTHER. I think Tom would have my picture over his bed.

THE MAN. It's there.

MOTHER. What does he look like?

THE MAN. Just as he looked on that day when you thought him so much handsomer than any other boy in the world.

MOTHER. How did you know I thought that?

THE MAN. You did.

MOTHER. Someone must have repeated it. I'll never trust Elsie Mathews again. Has he had any of his colds lately?

THE MAN. My dear lady, he slapped his chest and said to me—"Colds," says he; "I don't know the meaning of the word."

MOTHER. Oh, it's a comfort to know that. And he's happy?

THE MAN. As happy as any one who is always homesick could hope to be.

MOTHER. Then he is homesick?

THE MAN. Have you never looked in the glass?

MOTHER. Why should I?

THE MAN. To see what would make the boy homesick.

MOTHER [*with a happy sniff*]. I'm glad you came to our house.

THE MAN. I'm glad I came to your house. Tell me, did you prepare all this—all this holly and mistletoe and this fine spread?

MOTHER. I did.

THE MAN. You have done it beautifully.

MOTHER. Oh. And you're the first person who's told me so.

THE MAN. Oh, but you must take the silence of the others for most appreciative consent.

MOTHER. Yes, I will. I'm not really angry you kissed me under the mistletoe.

[*He rises, crosses and stands under the mistletoe.*]

THE MAN. Prove it!

MOTHER [*kissing him*]. There!

[*Enter the* FATHER.]

FATHER. Bless my soul, if you're not at it again. Go back to your place at once.

MOTHER. Father. I only——

FATHER. I know all about that. Go on inside.

MOTHER *is hustled into the dining room after*

smiling at the MAN.] And as for you, sir—what have you to say?

THE MAN. I plead guilty. You knew what you were doing when you married her.

FATHER. I'd like to know what you two have been talking about.

THE MAN. Her son, of course.

FATHER. Have you, though? He's my son, too.

THE MAN. Then there can't be much wrong with him.

FATHER. There isn't.

THE MAN. That's what I said.

FATHER [*looks at him fiercely, then breaks into a smile and finally a roar of hearty laughter*]. You're a pleasant sort of rascal. 'Pon my soul, I like you. Now, if there's anything I can do——

THE MAN. There is. Keep on laughing and don't let me have it all my own way with the mistletoe.

FATHER. That's sound talk—laughter and kisses, what? And down with the fellow who can't be merry at Christmas! Oh, my Sammy! [*He picks up a table knife, cuts a button off his coat and sticks it into the pudding.*]

THE MAN. Good work! But mark where you put it, please. I've no wish to die a bachelor.

FATHER. You dog, you! A Merry Christmas!

THE MAN. A Happy New Year!

FATHER. Pick up your plate and come in with me.

THE MAN [*thinks for a second, then shakes his*

head]. No, if you don't mind. I've a sort of fancy I'll stay here.

FATHER. What for?

THE MAN. Bait. I'll come in five minutes. [*Goes over and breaks off a piece of mistletoe which he hands to* FATHER.] Take a bit of this; it might be useful.

FATHER [*punching his ribs*]. You're right; Sammy! You're right, you rascal, you! And afterward we must meet again.

THE MAN. To compare notes.

FATHER. Notes! Scalps, my boy! That little Mam'zelle—she's a pretty girl, what?

THE MAN. You bad old man!

FATHER. Bad! What in thunder d'you mean? Christmas, my boy—Christmas!

THE MAN. And long may the spirit survive. [FATHER *picks up Christmas pudding and enters dining room boisterously. The man sits down at the table, and his chin resting on his hand, thinking. Presently the dining-room door opens.*]

WIFE'S VOICE. It's all right, Mam'zelle. I'll fetch it. [WIFE *enters, closes door and stands with her back against it. The* MAN *doesn't move, but he smiles.*]

THE MAN. Ah! But where did you leave it?

WIFE. Leave it?

THE MAN. What you came to seek.

WIFE. That was just an excuse.

THE MAN. I know what it is.

WIFE. What then?

THE MAN. Something to give away.

WIFE. Who are you? You seem to make people happy. Who are you?

THE MAN. A Santa Claus at fifteen bob, with beard, complete.

WIFE. No—no; apart from that.

THE MAN. A man who wasn't expected.

WIFE. Why did you come?

THE MAN. The unexpected always turns up.

WIFE. Does it?

THE MAN. Why not try?

WIFE. Try?

THE MAN. To turn up something unexpected.

WIFE [*sitting beside him*]. I feel I could talk to you. I want to talk to somebody most dreadfully.

THE MAN [*patting her hand*]. I know; and if here I'll fetch him.

WIFE. Fetch whom?

THE MAN. Your husband.

WIFE. No; it was about him I wanted to talk to you.

THE MAN. My dear! I wouldn't. It's so much better to talk *to* a man than *about* him.

WIFE [*gloomily*]. I can't. We've had—oh, I suppose it's only a misunderstanding; but——

THE MAN. There's only one cure for a misunderstanding—to have another misunderstanding.

WIFE. Oh, what do you mean?

THE MAN. You want to make it up?

WIFE. I'm miserable. But I could never stand down; I know I could never stand down.

THE MAN. Then stand up to him.

WIFE. Another row.

THE MAN. Not my way. Will you risk it?

WIFE. What must I do?

THE MAN. Just stand your ground and don't move; promise not to move, whatever happens.

WIFE. And I needn't speak?

THE MAN. Not a word.

WIFE. Only stand still?

THE MAN. That's all.

WIFE. I promise. [*He takes her by the arm and leads her to various spots in the room, standing back to survey her in each, shaking his head and trying the effect elsewhere. Finally he disposes her beneath the mistletoe and nods with satisfaction.*]

THE MAN. Yes, that'll do. Now, hold it! [*Then he goes up and opens the dining-room door.*] I say, could you spare a moment?

HUSBAND'S VOICE. Certainly. [*The* MAN *goes over to the window and looks out.* HUSBAND *enters.*]

HUSBAND [*looking at the* MAN'S *back*]. Yes; you wanted me?

THE MAN. Not I.

HUSBAND. But you——

THE MAN. I'm not the only person in the room. [*The* HUSBAND *turns with a puzzled air and sees his wife standing stock-still, looking absolutely unapproachable. He raises his eyes and sees the mistletoe, and a sudden excitement comes into them. She, too, follows their direction and realizes where she is standing. Colors furiously and shakes her head from side to side like a chained captive.*]

WIFE. Oh—oh!

THE MAN. I have your promise.

HUSBAND. Mary. [*He walks up and clasps his arms around her.*] Oh, my Mary! [*And the* WIFE *suddenly relaxes contentedly in her* HUSBAND'S *arms.*]

THE MAN. That was a misunderstanding, if you like. [MAM'ZELLE *enters with a plate of Christmas pudding and looks at the* HUSBAND *and* WIFE, *amazed.*]

MAM'ZELLE. I beg your pardon.

HUSBAND. We don't mind being seen, do we, Mary? Come on.

WIFE [*going to the* MAN *with outstretched hand*]. You were a beast—you were a dear—you——

THE MAN. An awful good motto in life—to get the kissing done first and have the row afterward.

WIFE. But you'd never have the row that way.

THE MAN [*smiling and laying a finger to his lips*]. You guessed.

HUSBAND [*at door*]. Mary! [*The* WIFE *and* HUSBAND *enter the dining room together.*]

MAM'ZELLE. I've brought your pudding, magician.

THE MAN. Didn't you bring yours, too, for company's sake?

MAM'ZELLE. I've had mine.

THE MAN. You have—and did you get a prophecy?

MAM'ZELLE. Um. [*She shows him a ring on her finger.*]

THE MAN. I knew; I knew. Heavens! Now

I wonder what the Fates have sent to me. [*He attacks the pudding vigorously with a fork and dives upon a little jingly bell.*]

MAM'ZELLE. A wedding bell.

THE MAN. Now, isn't that amazing!

MAM'ZELLE. It is rather extraordinary. [*They stand looking at each other. Outside the* CAROL SINGERS *start singing*:]

> God bless the master of this house,
> And bless the mistress too.

[*The sound of a window opening and the tinkle of money on the pavement.*]

FATHER'S VOICE. Here you are, boys. [*The* CAROL SINGERS *continue singing till end of play.*]

MAM'ZELLE. I ought to go back.

THE MAN. I shall come, too.

MAM'ZELLE. You must put on your beard again.

THE MAN [*puts on his beard and hood*]. Do me a favor.

MAM'ZELLE. Of course.

THE MAN. Put your hand under the mistletoe.

MAM'ZELLE [*does so*]. There!

THE MAN [*stoops and kisses her fingers*]. Are you glad?

MAM'ZELLE. About what?

THE MAN. Us. [MAM'ZELLE *nods very fast indeed.*]

THE MAN. Come on, then. [*He leads her into the dining room, where they are welcomed by a*

chorus of voices. The doors close. A stray white light picks up the holly.]

HOLLY. I say—I say—I say—and what's the score now?

MISTLETOE. I'm still counting. Haven't got the returns yet from that sprig the old man took; but, my word, three corkers, and *what a future!* [*Chimes of bells. Carols.*]

CURTAIN

AUTHOR'S NOTE TO PRODUCER

The best means of dealing with the voices would be the use of fairly long lengths of gas piping or speaking-tube pipes which would be brought through the scene flats to points as nearly as possible adjoining the objects that are speaking. These pipes should come from a central control—somewhere under the stage or behind curtains—that will muffle the origin of the sounds. Failing this method, cut very small holes in the scene flats and have people to speak through them.

The rays of light that are focussed upon the holly, mistletoe, and so on, should be as narrow and as intense as possible. In theatrical parlance they are known as "spot lines." To increase the effect of the opening scene, the general lighting of the stage should be checked down a trifle and come up to a normal intensity after the Voices have ceased speaking.

The setting of the stage should aim at an appearance of rather shabby comfort and avoid smartness. The tinsel of Christmas should be the dominant note and will be better sustained against a somber background.

ROLAND PERTWEE.

DECEMBER 8

(Joel Chandler Harris ("Uncle Remus") born December 8, 1848)

FLINGIN' JIM AND HIS FOOL-KILLER

ONE Saturday in the early 'seventies, a young negro, hardly more than a boy, who had gone to the village of Harmony Grove on some errand, aimless or otherwise, suddenly discovered that his presence was both opportune and important. He had come from what was known as the Briscoe settlement, which lay nine or ten miles north of Harmony Grove on the road to Malvern. Arriving in the village, he unhitched his horse from the ramshackle old buggy, tying the animal to the wheel so that the steed might nibble comfortably on a couple of bundles of fodder that lay loose in the rear of the seat. This done, he made his way to the small wooden building which Harmony Grove dignified by the name of depot, and which was at once the passenger-station and the storehouse for such freight as came to and went forth from that part of middle Georgia.

The negro had arrived during the forenoon, and the train was not due until two in the afternoon. Nevertheless, he made no long delay in taking up

his position on the sunny side of the platform around the miniature depot. In him, patience was next-door neighbor to sleep, and he was soon engaged in nodding; often he was on the point of falling from the platform, but always caught himself in the nick of time. In this way he made the long hours short.

The negro boy was effectually aroused finally by the rattle of the old hack which plied between the station and the tavern, and he straightened himself up. The hack passed so close to him, as he sat with his feet dangling from the platform, that the wheel-spokes struck against his toes.

"Humph! you must be tryin' to drag me down," he said to the driver, an older negro.

"What you tryin' to drag me down fer?" The tones of his voice were soft and drawling.

"Wanter see ef you 'live," replied the driver, curtly. His voice was in harsh contrast to that of the other.

"Well, when you foun' dat out," said the negro who had been nodding, "what den?" His tone was one of idle curiosity.

"Nothin' 'tall," answered the driver; "you ain't done nothin' ter me."

"Oh, I ain't? I thought maybe I hurt yo' feelin's some time when I wuz 'sleep." He laughed a flute-like laugh, as he continued: "I ain't done nothin'—well, dat won't be de tale you'll tell nex' time you try ter drag me down."

"I'm a blue-gum nigger," remarked the hack-driver, with a frown.

"Oh, you is?" laughed the other. "Well, dey useter be one down yan whar we-all live at. He ain't dar now. You go down dar an' ax um how come he ain't dar. Dey'll tell you terreckly."

"Boy, whar you fum?"

"Man, I'm from de Briscoe settlement."

"What yo' name?"

"Flingin' Jim."

"Well, suh!" exclaimed the driver. He turned around in his seat and stared at the negro from the Briscoe settlement with great interest. The fame of the latter had evidently gone before him.

"How come you kin fling rocks like folks say you kin?" the driver asked.

"'Kaze, when I wuz little a fox-squirrel sassied me an' made me mad. I promised 'im I'd git 'im, an' I got 'im."

"Well, suh!" repeated the driver. Then, "How 'bout de blue-gum nigger?"

"Who—him? Well, he don't b'long 'roun' dar nohow. An' sho 'nuff, he ain't dar now!"

The whistle of the locomotive was heard a mile away, and presently its funnel-shaped smoke-stack appeared around a curve, and the whole train, consisting of a number of freight-cars, a baggage-car, and a passenger-coach soon drew up at the station.

Flingin' Jim kept his seat on the platform, and the driver remained in his place in the hack, although the train and such bustle as its arrival created were on the farther side of the building. In a little while the baggage-master, a florid young

fellow, came around and threw a comsumptive-looking mail-sack at the hack-driver's feet.

"Any passengers?" inquired the negro.

"I hunted around in the car and found one a piece down the road. He may have walked and beat us in," said the baggage-master.

Nevertheless the passenger had been patient enough to remain on the slow-going train, and he now appeared.

"Is there a livery-stable here?" he inquired. Receiving an affirmative reply, he asked if it was possible to get a "conveyance" to the Briscoe settlement.

Flingin' Jim sat up straight at this, and looked hard at the stranger from under the brim of his wool hat.

"Yassar, you kin git took out," replied the driver, "but all de bes' stock done hired out. De town young men went huntin' dis mornin', some in buggies, an' some on hossback. But dar's a boy I speck kin take you out. I dunner what kinder rig he got."

"She ain't right bran'-new," said Flingin' Jim, with a grin, "an' she may wabble some, but she'll lan' you dar, suh."

"Very well, I'll go with you."

The gentleman—he was a stranger to both negroes—was tall and dark. His face was far from handsome, but his features were strong. His eyebrows were very heavy. When he lifted them, as he did when asking a question, his face was sombre. When they fell back over his keen black

eyes, his countenance seemed to be both fierce and arrogant. And yet, in spite of this aspect, in spite of the heavy moustache and imperial, there were lines of both tenderness and humor about his mouth. He appeared to be about thirty. The hack-driver had turned his team and was on his way back to the hotel when he saw Flingin' Jim wrestling with a huge valise. He came to a halt, and called out:

"Fetch dat kyarpet-sack here an' put 'er in de hack; I'll take it uptown."

"You sho doin' me right dis time," said Flingin' Jim, gratefully. "Dey wouldn't be no trunks an' no chists ef ev'body had dis kinder doin's."

The stranger paid no attention to all this, but stood on the platform gazing curiously at an old two-story building that sat in a clump of pines on a hill to the right. The building had once been the village academy. He was aroused by the hack-driver, who inquired if he would ride to the village, the centre of which was half a mile away.

No, he would walk. He took his time about it, too, sauntering along and pausing to take in some scene or prospect that seemed to strike his fancy.

Flingin' Jim was ready and waiting when the stranger arrived on the public square. The old buggy was hardly presentable. The paint and varnish had all worn off, and what had been the dashboard was now simply a frame of rusty iron; but the vehicle was still strong, having been made in the days when good, honest workmanship was in fashion.

No fault could be found with the horse, which was a creature of some spirit, trotting steadily and swiftly when the road was level, and taking the shorter hills with a bound and a rush.

As they went along, the gentlemen fell into conversation with the negro, and soon learned that some member of his family had been in the habit of coming to town every Saturday for several years; sometimes his mammy would come, but for a long time his daddy had been coming. Now, however, the responsibility had been laid on his shoulders.

"It's Mammy's doin's," explained Flingin' Jim. "She got it strong in 'er min' dat Marse Phil Moseley gwine ter come back some time."

"But why on a Saturday?"

"Ef I ax myse'f dat question one time, I ax it leb'n hunder'd an' leb'nty-leb'n times," replied Flingin' Jim. "Mammy may know why, but she ain't tol' me."

"What is your mammy's name?"

"Elviry Moseley, suh. We-all useter b'long ter de Moseleys, suh. My daddy name Bob Moseley. Marse Phil useter call 'im Unk Bobuel. Daddy 'low he speck Mammy's sen'in' in atter Marse Phil."

"Phil who?" inquired the gentleman.

"Marse Phil Moseley. Daddy say he wish Marse Phil'd make 'as'e an' come on ef he comin', kaze it's terrifyin' ter hafter stop a plough-hand eve'y Sat'day in de year, 'specially when de grass is in de craps."

"Well, I should think so!" exclaimed the gentle-

man. "What does your mammy want with this Phil Moseley?"

"Des want 'im ter come back. Big house dar empty an' gwine ter rack, an' Mr. Bill Dukes says de county gwine ter step in presently an' sell de whole place fer taxation er sump'n like dat."

"What has become of the rest of the Moseleys? Was Philip the last of his family?"

"Oh, dey wuz mo' un um, suh; but some went off an' some done dead—Miss Sue, she married, an' I bet you she's a-makin' dat man toe de mark right now, dis very minit. Miss Sue wuz cousin ter Marse Phil's ma's cousin."

The gentleman laughed for the first time, an event so unexpected that Flingin' Jim looked at him sidewise, and asked him if he knew Miss Sue.

"I've heard of her," was the reply. "I used to know Phil Moseley, and he told me about her."

"Is Marse Phil dead?" asked the boy.

"Yes; he's dead, but he's not buried."

Flingin' Jim thought this matter over for some little time. "Well, suh!" he exclaimed. "Dead an' ain't buried!" The statement rhymed, in his mind, with some old folk tale he had heard his elders tell. "No wonder dey say de house ha'nted. I speck it's Marse Phil comin' back kaze he wanter be buried."

"You are certainly correct about that," said the traveller, with grave emphasis.

The sun was still shining when Flingin' Jim and his passenger passed by the little church which seemed to interpose its presence between the

settlement and the evil influences that might be presumed to emanate from the village miles away. Established as it was upon a hill, the church was properly termed Mount Horeb, and this name had belonged to it ever since the third year after Matthew Clopton had settled at Shady Dale. If the building is standing to-day, it is one hundred and ten years old.

A few hundred yards farther on, they passed by a field in which an old negro woman was digging, while a boy was kneeling near by gathering up the result of her labors.

"Dat's Granny," Flingin' Jim explained; "Granny an' my Brer Sam. I speck dey er gittin' a mess er taters fer Sunday. Well, suh!" he exclaimed, "ef Granny ain't got de long-handle weedin'-hoe you kin shoot me!"

"Well, why not?"

"Kaze she allers say dat when anybody see 'er diggin' wid de long-handle weedin'-hoe sump'n 'bout ter happen. She been had dat hoe und' her house ever sence Marse Phil went 'way."

"She must have felt that a stranger was coming," remarked Jim's passenger.

"Granny sho is a plum sight," said Flingin' Jim, with pride. "Is dey any special place whar you wanter be took, suh?"

"What about this haunted Moseley house?" the stranger inquired. "If there is any bed or furniture left, I should like to stay there. Couldn't your mammy manage to get me up something to eat?"

"She mighty handy wid de pots an' pans, suh," the negro replied.

They drove to the old house which loomed up dark and grim even with the last rays of the setting sun shining upon its tall roof. Flingin' Jim left his passenger sitting in the buggy and ran to his mammy's house, which was not far away. Elviry heard what Jim had to say.

"'Tain't Marse Phil," she remarked, with a sigh. "Ef it had 'a' been Marse Phil, he wouldn't 'a' waited fer you ter come atter me. An' mo' 'an dat, he'd 'a' axed you 'bout—but n'er min'; I'll go an' look at 'im."

The gentleman made known his desires in a very few words. He had come to look after the Moseley property, and settle up all the affairs of the estate. If there was a bed left in the house, he would like to sleep there, and if Elviry could cook him something to eat while he remained in the neighborhood, he would pay her well.

The woman hesitated one brief moment, with a question on her lips. Then she went around the house and soon had the front door open. The stranger had taken his heavy valise from the buggy with one hand and carried it to the veranda as easily as if it weighed not more than a pound and a half—a fact that caused Flingin' Jim to utter an exclamation of surprise.

By the time the gentleman entered the door, more than one candle was lit. Placing his valise in the hall, he called to Jim, "How much do I owe you?"

"Mammy'll tell you dat, suh," responded the negro, and at once drove the buggy away.

However grim and dark the exterior features of the old house appeared to be, the interior presented a most homelike appearance. On every side there were evidences of neat housekeeping. On the hearth a fire was kindled. A clock in the dining room chimed the half-hour, answered by the clear bell of the clock on the sitting-room mantel. It was half-past six.

"You must have been expecting someone," the stranger suggested.

"Not specially, suh," replied Elviry. "We des tryin' ter please Marse Phil. He liable to drap in any minit, an' I know mighty well he'd like ter have eve'thing look like it did de day he went off. A white lady comes an' fixes up fer me when I have ter clean up. You see dat book on de table dar? Well, Marse Phil wuz lookin' at it de mornin' he lef', an' when he turn 'roun' to say good-bye to we-all, he laid it right whar you see it layin' now."

"Is that so?" said the stranger.

"'Twon't be no trouble fer ter git yo' supper," continued Elviry. "We allers has eve'thing ready ag'in' de hour when Marse Phil is ter come."

"But suppose he doesn't come?"

"He des bleege ter come; dey ain't no two ways 'bout dat." Having thus settled the matter, she piloted the gentleman to the back porch, where there was fresh water to drink, and to remove the dust of travel.

Supper was soon ready, and it was a good one, to which the newcomer did ample justice. Elviry had placed two candles on the table, and had so arranged them that they would illuminate the gentleman's face. Beyond praising Elviry's cooking, he said nothing; but when he had dulled the edge of his appetite, he suddenly looked up. Seeing Elviry regarding him intently, he smiled.

"Bless God!" she exclaimed, clapping her hands together.

"What is the trouble?" he asked.

"Why, I come mighty nigh fergittin' de jam!" Elviry replied, in a tone so queer that the gentleman looked at her again; this time with amazement.

The jam was promptly forthcoming. When he had finished, the gentleman declared that it was the best supper he had eaten in many years. He paused on his way to the sitting room, saying:

"How much do I owe you for the buggy ride?"

"Who? Me? How much you owe fer bein' brung out here? A ten-dollar bill in greenbacks—dat's how much!"

"Well, I'll be——!" exclaimed the gentleman.

Elviry went out into the hallway. "Come in de settin' room," she said. "Set down in dat cheer dar." The stranger complying, Elviry seated herself on the floor near the corner of the hearth.

She picked up a splinter that had fallen from the kindling, and looked at it, twisting it around and about her fingers. "Marse Phil," she said, still studying the sliver of pine, "I been knowin'

de Moseleys ever sence I been born, an' been hear talk er dem what I ain't knowed, an' dis de fust time, in so fur ez I knows, dat arrer one un um wuz ever cotch sneakin' back home."

The man's face reddened and his jaw fell, but Elviry saw nothing of that; she was studying the pine splinter.

"Plague on you!" Moseley exclaimed, "how did you know me?" There was irritation in his tone, but no anger.

"I knowed you by the skyar on you' lip, whar you cut it wid a chany cup when you wuz l'arnin' ter walk."

"Why, there's no scar there," he replied, taking a candle and examining his lip in a mirror.

"You draw you mouf open like you gwine ter laugh, an' you'll see it show red." At this he laughed in earnest, and sure enough the scar showed, a tiny stroke of red. He replaced the candle on the table and seated himself again. During all this time Elviry never raised her face to look at Moseley; and he, looking at her intently, suddenly remembered this was always her way. She was fifteen when she became his nurse, and he was a month old. Until he was nine, she nursed him or followed him about, and he remembered with something like a pang that during all these years the only rebuke she ever administered was to display shame or grief when he transgressed the rules of right conduct.

"I suppose you are ashamed again," he suggested, somewhat curtly.

"Yassar, I is; mo' 'shame' now dan all de yuther times put terge'er." She paused, but he made no reply, and she went on: "Marse Phil, how come you ter do it; what make you do it? Is dey anybody atter you? Wuz you feared we-all wuz cheatin' you?"

The truth is, he hardly knew the motives that had prompted him to refrain from making himself known, especially to Elviry. He had reasons—not very good ones, perhaps; still they were reasons. As he used to do when a child, he proceeded to put Elviry on the defensive.

"Why didn't you go around telling everybody that you were sending after me every Saturday?"

For the first time since she had been in the room, she raised her head and looked at him through her tears. "Do which, Marse Phil?"

"Why didn't you send word around the neighborhood that you were sending to town for me every Saturday? You didn't even tell Uncle Bobuel, did you?"

For answer, Elviry threw back her head and laughed joyously. "Dat des de way you use ter do when you wuz little. Now you nee'nter b'lieve I dunner why I ain't tell Bob, kaze I does; but I can't put it right plain in words." Even while she laughed, she was wiping away the tears.

"That's about the way I feel," said Philip Moseley. "There's no reason why I shouldn't have had handbills scattered around announcing that on a certain day Phil Moseley would return to his old home, but I didn't."

"But you ain't tell me 'bout it atter you done come. You never said howdy, an' you never shuck han's."

"Well, I'll not bother you long, and I'll shake han's when I start back home."

"*Home! Home!*" exclaimed Elviry, with vehemence. "Ain't dis yo' home? Ain't dis whar ole miss an' ole marster live an' die at?" In her earnestness Elviry rose to her feet and stood facing Philip Moseley.

"Well, I've lived in Mississippi so long that it feels more like home than this place." He had followed the fortunes of Bedford Forrest during the war, and had gone with that great fighter to Mississippi when Providence called a truce.

"Seven year ain't so long," she replied.

He made no reply, and she suddenly asked, "Is you married, Marse Phil?"

"No, by George! and I never expect to be."

Elviry fumbled at the red tablecloth with her fingers. "Well, dey useter be a young lady some'rs in dis county dat you set some sto' by."

"Yes," he replied, stroking his moustache. "I've forgotten her name. The only thing I remember about her is that she gave me the back of her hand and the toe of her shoe, as the saying is."

"Well!" cried Elviry. It is impossible to describe on paper the tone and emphasis employed by the negro woman to charge this simple exclamation with doubt, distrust, and contempt.

He looked up at her, and something he saw in

her face, some expression of pity not unmixed with disgust, caused his eyes to fall and the blood to rush to his face. It was almost as if he were a boy again.

"Well—what?" he said, with some irritation.

"Nothin' 'tall, suh," Elviry replied.

Her voice was low and humble. She turned slowly away and went about cleaning off the table in the dining room.

Something or other in the situation gave Philip Moseley considerable discomfort. As he sat there gazing in the fire, the face of a girl he used to know slowly shaped itself in his memory—the face of Ann Briscoe. It was a very striking face, sensitive, proud, reserved, and yet marked by a tenderness that flashed from lustrous brown eyes—a face that was noble rather than beautiful. Specifications such as these had not occurred to Moseley's mind during the days when he was to be found at Ann Briscoe's elbow, or riding by her side at all proper hours. But now, he could check off each feature of that haunting face, and glibly give the name of each quality or group of qualities that it stood for. He knew now why neither he nor any one else had ever called her "Annie," though the fact used to puzzle him.

He had been grandly and dramatically in love with Ann Briscoe in his early youth, and for some years afterward. The two had, in fact, exchanged pledges when he started off for the war. He wrote her as soon as an opportunity offered, and that was the last of his youthful dream. He

wrote again, to be sure, and the third time, but no reply ever came, and he gave himself over to some very miserable hours during the long days and nights that followed. In fact, he knew now why he had come sneaking back, as Elviry had said, and he knew only too well why he had refrained from making inquiries about this girl he used to know. Girl? If still unmarried, she must now be an old maid of twenty-six.

Elviry had had her own hopes. But these had been shattered and her plans crumbled before her eyes. She said to herself that the Marse Phil she had been expecting for so long was not the Marse Phil she had formerly known, and she felt that his return was but a matter of money.

Philip Moseley could hear her muttering to herself as she cleared the table or as she crossed the hall. Her words failed to reach him, but what she was saying was that he needn't be afraid that anybody had cheated him out of a thrip. The truth is, the affairs of the plantation had been well managed. The court of ordinary had appointed 'Squire Barksdale administrator until such time as Philip Moseley should return or until proof of his death was forthcoming.

Judge Barksdale was glad to lease the plantation to Ann Briscoe, who, in managing her own property after the war, had developed a considerable capacity for business. She had, too, the advice of her father, who, though a helpless invalid, had a clear head and a vigorous mind.

There was just enough enthusiasm left in Elviry

to urge her to bring about a quick settlement of the whole business. The next morning, after she had prepared breakfast for Philip Moseley, she returned to her own house. The day was Sunday, but she stirred up things at a lively rate. She had an errand for her husband, who was sunning himself on the door-sill.

"Bob, you git up fum dar, an' take yo' foot in yo' hand' an' go tell Miss Ann fer ter sen' dem 'count-books what she been keepin'. Take dat bag dar an' fetch um in it. Ef she ain't dar, you come back an' tell me; I know right whar dey is. Now, man, move like you got some life in you!" She followed him to the opening of the rugged fence that answered the purpose of a gate. "Min', now, ef she ain't dar, you come right back."

Uncle Bobuel knew from Elviry's tone that something more than ordinarily serious was on foot, and he made no delay. He covered the half-mile to and fro in a very short time, bringing back with him a number of account-books, mainly copy-books, such as children use at school; but among these were two or three "day-books" which had been made to serve the purpose of ledgers. They were all neatly arranged and carefully tied together.

Now, if Ann Briscoe had been at home, this bundle of account-books would never have been given to Uncle Bobuel. The contents of all of them had been summed up and set forth in one of the larger books. But Miss Ann had gone from home immediately after an early breakfast; she

had heard that one of her friends was ill, so she determined to call on her way to church. Her father was at home, however, and when Uncle Bobuel made his desires known, Mr. Briscoe wheeled his chair into the library, pointed out the books, and bade the negro get them down from the shelf.

"Take 'em along, take 'em along," he said, with some petulance. "I don't see why Barksdale can't come here and look at 'em."

"'Tain't Marse Barksdale, suh," remarked Uncle Bobuel. "I 'lowed fum de way Elviry done, dat it mought be Marse Phil Moseley hisse'f."

"Well, he's got nothing in the world to do with these accounts," exclaimed Mr. Briscoe, with some heat. "But take 'em along, take 'em along. Your Miss Ann has nothing to hide."

Now, as a matter of fact, Ann did have something very important to hide; something of which her father knew nothing. Nevertheless, Uncle Bobuel took the bundle and went trudging home with it. Once there, he handed it over to Elviry, who took it from the bag and placed it on her head. Nicely balancing it, she took a pitcher in one hand and a basket in the other, and made her way to the big house. Strange to say, the house seemed to be lonelier than ever. The door was open, but the blinds in front were tightly closed. She carried the package of books into the sitting room and placed it on the table.

"Here de sums an' figgers. Ef dey er wrong

anywhar, dey kin be sot right. 'Twon't take Miss Ann two minits an' a half ter fix um." Elviry had almost as much respect for Miss Ann's "sums and figgers" as she had for Miss Ann herself.

"Why, I asked for no accounts," said Moseley. "I wouldn't know head from tail if I were to go through them a dozen times. Who has kept these accounts? Miss Ann Briscoe; very well. If Miss Ann Briscoe says they are all right, that settles it with me."

"Well, dar dey is," Elviry insisted, "an' dar I'll leave um. You may change yo' min' 'bout lookin' at um, an' den you'll fin' um handy. Mo' dan dat, I ain't got no place ter put um at, less'n I sen' um back ter Briscoe's."

She waited for some response to this, but Moseley was watching a belated white butterfly fluttering about the flower-garden, where a few fall blossoms were in bloom. Observing his abstraction, and resenting it as indifference, Elviry turned and hurried from the room to see about dinner. But Moseley called her back.

"Elviry, what in the name of heaven has Ann Briscoe to do with this place?" His manner was very solemn.

"You better ax what she ain't got ter do with it," replied Elviry. "Why, Marse Phil, ef it hadn't been fer me an' Miss Ann de whole place would 'a' gone ter rack an' ruin. All yo' blood kin done dead, an' de lawyers des a-waitin' a chance fer ter hatch up a showin' dat you done

dead too. Dat what I hear Marse Barksdale say, an' Miss Ann 'gree wid 'im."

As Moseley said no more, Elviry went about her business, still in a pucker. Moseley untied the package of account-books and began to examine them with indifferent interest. He remembered Ann Briscoe's handwriting well. There was a certain boldness and deftness in its style, bordering on masculinity, and these qualities were thoroughly characteristic. He remembered how completely she differed from all the women he had ever met in her open sincerity, and her complete indifference to those trivial and unimportant conventions that are made so much of by the great majority of the weaker sex. She was thoroughly a woman, but possessed both common-sense and humor.

Philip Moseley remembered all these characteristics with satisfaction rather than indifference, as he thumbed one book after another. Presently, in the very centre of the bundle, he came upon a paper-bound volume a trifle smaller than the rest. It was the young woman's diary, and he felt that he had no right to open its pages. And yet—he had opened them. At the moment the thought occurred to him, his thumb lay against a date line—"July 31, 1861." The entry that followed was in these words: "P. M. has now been gone three months to a day. He was to write and he has not written. Mr. Dukes, who was in P. M.'s company, has returned on a furlough. He says that all are well. To me this is very

strange news—that all should be well. Mr. Dukes said that the soldier boys in his company 'loaded him down' with letters and messages. A letter from P. M. to me would have been the last feather to break the camel's back. Mr. Dukes has been kind enough to remind me that he asked me to marry him before he went away, and I have been cold enough to ask him if he remembers what my answer was." Another entry was made under date of January 4, 1862: "Still no word from P. M. It is really curious that one's *friends* should be dead and still lack burial."

Moseley closed the book with a laugh, remembering the remark he had made to Flingin' Jim. Yet in his inmost soul his emotions were tragical enough to suit the occasion. He tied the books together again, and went out into the garden, where he paced up and down the familiar walks, thinking. His memory had become absurdly strong and vivid. He remembered that as he was writing his first letter to Ann Briscoe, some of the boys started a rabbit—their camp was newly pitched in the neighborhood of hedges and thickets of briars. The yells of the troops had so frightened the rabbit that it ran blindly into his tent and took refuge between his feet as he sat writing.

He could remember, also, some of the tenderer passages of the letter. He had written in a great glow of feeling, for it was a period of his life when hope, and courage, and the passionate devotion of youth ran high. He remembered that his first

letter had been intrusted to a man named Grierson —a friend and kinsman of this William Dukes whose name Moseley had found celebrated in Ann Briscoe's diary. Grierson had been transferred, at his own request, to the Department of the Gulf, and on his way there, intended to stop at Harmony Grove to transact some business for Mr. Dukes.

Dukes—well, something about the name must have been funny, for Moseley smiled as he spoke it aloud. Then he lit a cigar, the fumes of which, floating houseward to Elviry, caused that appreciative individual to pause in her labors long enough to remark, "Hit sho do smell like ol' times." Then there was the "P. M." of the diary. Did the letters stand for *post meridian* or *post mortem?* Again Moseley smiled, and Flingin' Jim, passing by at the time, took it to himself and bowed, lifting his hat.

"Good-morning, James," said Moseley.

"I'm mighty well, suh. I seed Granny totin' de big basket des now."

"Now, is that so?" inquired Moseley, gravely. "And on Sunday, too?"

"Yes, suh, Granny been sayin' fer de longest, dat when she dig wid de long-handle hoe, an' tote a big basket down ter de spring an' back, hit's gwinter be de sign er sump'n. Specially when she tote de hoe an' de basket. I ax her what she got in dar, an' she say, 'Larroze ter ketch meddlers.'"

"Well, well!" exclaimed Moseley, with a solemn affectation of wonder.

"Dat's Granny's sesso, suh, it sho is; larroze

ter ketch meddlers. She say dat when she do like dat, hit's gwineter be a sign ter we-all in de fambly dat Marse Phil done come back."

"You don't tell me! And has he returned?"

"I speck he is, suh," replied Flingin' Jim, directing a shrewd but fleeting glance at Moseley. "Ef he ain't here now, he'll come ter-day."

"By the bye, do you know a man named Grierson?" Moseley inquired. He had no thought but to change the subject.

"Huh!" grunted Flingin' Jim, "eve'ybody know dat man. He come here right atter de war, an' settle down close ter Mr. Bill Dukes. Dey say Bill Dukes gi' 'im de lan'. But he ain't been here long 'fo' he had a fallin' out wid Bill Dukes an' his Brer Tom, an' dey cotch 'im out one night an' come mighty nigh beatin' 'im ter death. He been cripple ever sence. Dem Dukes is monstrous servigrous folks—dey sho is."

"H-m-m! So I've been told."

"Dey tol' you right dat time. After dis Grierson man got his beatin', he took an' move off. You know whar de Trimbles useter live? Well, right dar you'll fin' Grierson—des beyan' de Tunison place. He married Miss Jane Fraley. Miss Jane wuz a right promisin' white 'oman when she married Grierson, but now——" Flingin' Jim paused and shook his head. "Marse Barksdale say dat eve'y year count fer ten wid Miss Jane sence she married dat man. Folks say dat man put a spell on her." Evidently Flingin' Jim was fond of gossip.

"Is there a horse on the place that's fit to ride?" Moseley asked.

Flingin' Jim laughed. "We got one dat's fitten, but I don't speck you kin ride 'im. Miss Ann rides 'im sometimes, but it's all she kin do."

"Well, saddle him directly after diner. I want to pay a party call."

"Daddy'll saddle 'im, suh—not me."

Whereupon Moseley went to the barn to inspect the horse, and, if possible, make friends with him. The creature was very peculiarly marked. He was a chestnut sorrel, but his head, a part of his neck, and the near hind-leg were as white as milk, the skin underneath giving it the pinkish reflection which frequently marks the albino type. Sherman's army, in passing through that section, took all the stock on the Briscoe plantation, but left in its place a thoroughbred mare which was in no condition to travel farther. The peculiarly marked horse was her offspring.

Moseley soon discovered that the bad character which Flingin' Jim had given to the horse was due partly to the lack of understanding, and partly to the desire of Uncle Bobuel, who had the care of him, to win a reputation for himself as the manager of an unmanageable horse. The astonishment of Flingin' Jim was great when the strange gentleman, who had never seen the dangerous animal before, walked confidently into the stall, untied the halter, and led the well-groomed horse out into the sunlight. Beyond a few antics which never carried him to the length of his halter-strap, the

creature did nothing but stand with his head high, and draw into his pink nostrils huge volumes of the sweet atmosphere which is the boon that Indian summer brings to those who know her and watch for her coming.

"Miss Ann named 'im Prince, suh, an' dat what we-all calls 'im," said Flingin' Jim, by way of comment.

Prince was too fat for hard service, but otherwise he had been carefully groomed. His coat shone like satin in the sun, and his peculiar markings gave him an uncanny appearance. Nevertheless, Prince was very beautiful.

"Daddy say he savin' Prince for Marse Phil," Flingin' Jim went on. "He say Marse Phil kin ride any hoss what'll stay on de groun'. Dey all say dat. But Daddy, he 'low dat when Marse Phil come, he'll ride dat hoss wid a halter."

Everything, it seemed, was waiting for Philip Moseley, and everything was for his special glorification.

After dinner, Moseley called to Flingin' Jim to show him where the bridles and saddles were, and the horse was soon ready for the journey to Mr. Grierson's. At one part of the proceedings, the negro boy shook his head. The horse had always been ridden with a curb, but Moseley substituted a snaffle. By the time he had settled himself in the saddle, he seemed to be a part of the horse; and somehow the appearance of both was greatly improved. The first burst of eagerness over, the horse settled down into the long, swinging

stride that was the perfection of ease and grace; and for the first time in many a long day Moseley found himself enjoying some of the sensations peculiar to the years of his youth.

Mr. Grierson was at home. Alas! he was always at home these days, so Mrs. Grierson said, as she met Philip Moseley at the door. Prepared by Flingin' Jim's description, the visitor had no difficulty in recognizing the lady whom he had known before her marriage as Miss Jane Fraley; but there was no point of resemblance between the buxom Jenny and this shrunken and weazened woman, old before her time.

Shrunken as she was, Moseley soon discovered that what she had lost in flesh she had gained in spirit and temper, and he quickly found that the gossip which placed her in the attitude of an abused wife, had not a particle of basis in fact.

"Wishin' may be believin'," said Mrs. Grierson, "but it's strong in my mind that you're no other than Phil Moseley."

"You are right, madam," was the reply, "and I'm very glad to see you again."

"Well, you've come in the nick of time, and I thank the Lord for that much," exclaimed Mrs. Grierson.

"Janey! Janey!" cried a wheezy voice from within; "don't talk so loud. Dill Dukes'll git wind of your wild words an' he'll be down upon us."

"Listen at him—just listen! I could die when I hear him say that! Oh, if I was a man!" Mrs.

Grierson's voice was so stifled by passion that she spoke in a hoarse whisper. And then, in impotent rage, she beat her clenched hand against the door-facing.

She recovered herself almost immediately, saying, "Don't take me for a fool till you see me in the lunatic asylum."

He followed her into an inner room, where, lying upon a rude stretcher, he saw Mr. Grierson, the shadow of a wreck, and yet clinging to life most strenuously. The stretcher on which he lay had wheels at one end and handles at the other, so that it could be rolled from room to room.

"Look at that," said Mrs. Grierson, grimly, pointing at the wretch; "look at it and tell me what you think of it."

It was out of the question that Moseley should enter into the woman's mood.

"Mr. Grierson probably doesn't remember me," he remarked.

"Well, I reckon I do," cried the cripple, petulantly, "when I've laid awake all night many a night waitin' for you."

"I'm truly sorry to see you in such a plight," remarked Moseley.

"Plight—plight? What's plight got to do wi' it? I tell you it's the mind that works trouble; the body hain't got a thing to do wi' it. It's the mind—the mind, constant a-wanderin' and a-tossin'. Roll me in t'other room, Janey, where there's a better light."

This was promptly done, and Moseley was pressed to have a seat in the rocking-chair.

"I have no long time to stay," the visitor remarked. "Mr. Grierson, several years ago I intrusted you with a letter. You were going to Harmony Grove, and it was to be posted there. Have you any idea what became of that letter?"

Mr. Grierson rolled his eyes toward his wife, who was sitting beside the stretcher, and the response came from her.

"He knows; he knows mighty well. He took the letter, brought it to the Grove, and handed it over to Tom Dukes, just as Bill Dukes told him to do."

"I'll tell you why I done it," said Mr. Grierson. "I done it because Bill Dukes told me to do it. He and his folks had favored me in many ways. He said he was engaged to be married to Miss Ann, and that she didn't want to be pestered wi' letters, so I fetched it here and handed it over to Tom Dukes."

"And you see what's come of it all," remarked Mrs. Grierson, solemnly, with a gesture toward the wreck on the stretcher.

"Did it ever occur to you to say something about it to Miss Ann?" inquired Moseley.

"It certainly did," responded Mrs. Grierson, with emphasis, "but I didn't know her so mighty well, and I went about it the wrong way, I reckon. Anyhow, she cut me up. That was—oh, ever so long ago. But one day durin' last summer, I met

Ann Briscoe in the road, and she asked me plump and plain what I meant when I spoke to her about a letter. Well, she had cut me up, and I paid her back then and there. Says I, 'When I wanted to tell you, you wouldn't listen, and now I'll not tell you.'"

"And that ain't all," said Mr. Grierson, raising his peevish voice. "Every letter that ever passed betwixt you fell into the hands of Tom or Bill Dukes. Why, I've hearn 'em laugh about the way they worked it. Well, Bill and Tom Dukes they done it. I says to Bill Dukes, 'You didn't git the gal after all, and I'm blasted well glad of it.' One word fetched on another and both of 'em lit on me, and I ain't never walked a step from that day to this."

"You know what I believe, Phil Moseley?" suddenly remarked Mrs. Grierson. "I believe Providence has worked for you from the first jump."

"I'm afraid not," replied Moseley, shaking his head. And yet he had often noted some very curious coincidences in his career. Nevertheless—

"Nevertheless," said he, giving voice to his thought, "the two men who have done me the foulest wrong are alive and prospering."

"They're alive and prospering to-day," commented Mr. Grierson, "but the Almighty don't go by human clocks. Don't the Good Book say som'r's that a thousand years ain't more'n a minute wi' Him?"

"That is true," said Moseley, rising to take his

departure. He promised to come again, after assuring and reassuring Mr. Grierson that he bore no ill-will. "You were but a blind tool in the hands of these men," he explained to the old man. "Both of them will have to answer to me for their rascality."

"Well, thank the Lord for that much!" exclaimed Mrs. Grierson. "You'll find that when they have to toe the mark, they won't be so full of fight as they are when they jump on a man when his back's turned."

Philip Moseley bade the couple good-bye, and was soon skimming along the red road, enjoying to the utmost the swift undulations of the spirited animal he was riding. He sat perfectly erect in the saddle, his bridle-hand low, and his right arm hanging easily by his side. He looked neither to the right nor to the left. He saluted or raised his hat to every person he met on the road, or passed going in the same direction. There were a number of vehicles going his way, and in one of them sat Judge Barksdale, who was a justice of the peace, a man of affairs, and one of the most popular citizens of the county. It was Judge Barksdale, who, exercising his neighborly impulses, took occasion to point out to the court of ordinary the necessity of appointing an administrator for the Moseley estate.

"Now, that is what I call riding," exclaimed the Judge, as Philip Moseley sped past. "If the horse was to turn a somersault and light on his feet, you'd see that chap right where he is. Why,

I believe that's the Moseley horse." Molly, his daughter, was sure of it. "Well, well! I hope it's Phil," said the old man.

Now, when Ann Briscoe reached home from church that afternoon, it chanced that her father was asleep. When he awoke, the incident of the morning had passed from his mind, and it was not until he was ready to retire for the night that he remembered it.

"You've heard the news, I reckon," he remarked to Ann.

"No, I've heard none."

"Well, they say Phil Moseley has come back." He did not look at Ann.

"Who brought the news?" she inquired.

"Why, old Bob. After you went to church, I heard a mighty shuffling and scrambling on the front porch, and there was old Bob in such a hurry and flurry that he scarcely had time to wait for what he came after."

"And what did he want, pray?"

"He said Elviry sent him for the account-books; and when I asked him what in the world she wanted with 'em, he replied that he thought Phil Moseley had come back. I told old Bob flat and plain that Moseley had no more to do with the accounts than a man in the next county."

"That is quite true," said Ann, trying to assume the attitude which would enable her to crush Moseley, should he dare to speak to her for any reason or purpose whatever.

"But I considered the matter," her father went

on, "and rather than give Moseley the idea that we have anything to hide, I told old Bob to take the books and mosey along with 'em."

The next morning, bright and early, Ann Briscoe was up attending to the various duties and responsibilities which she had gradually taken upon herself. She felt unduly elated, as she supposed, and she tried, with some determination, to put the feeling aside. She had long ago reduced the romantic illusions of her youth to a consistency of fibre (as it were) which the fluttering moths of sentiment could not successfully assail. Nevertheless, it was a period full of very pleasant memories, and after breakfast Ann decided to reread a part of her diary. Her notes covered only a year and a half, but during that time she had been quite faithful in jotting down the sentiments and emotions with which her mind was charged.

She reached her desk, ransacked the shelves of the library, and then, flinging up her hands, fell upon a sofa as if she had been shot. She had suddenly remembered that the diary had been placed among the books containing the accounts of the Moseley plantation. Her swift imagination could perceive Philip Moseley reading and laughing over the innocent confessions therein set forth. Her most intimate emotions, as she supposed, had been faithfully interpreted and written out, and the thought of it caused her to write in agony. But the young woman's collapse was of no long duration.

Suspended from the ceiling of the back porch

there hung a steel triangle, and alongside it a piece of steel about ten inches long with which to strike it. This was known on the Briscoe place as Miss Ann's gong. It was as loud as a country church-bell, and was used to summon field-hands to dinner, or to call such of the servants as were not in sight. One blow upon this gong meant a particular servant, two blows another, and three blows were a call for the man who attended to the mules and horses.

Ann Briscoe hurried from the library to this gong, and struck three blows with such vehemence that the man (he was grooming Miss Ann's saddle-horse) dropped everything and ran to the house as rapidly as if he had been called to quench a fire.

"Saddle my horse," commanded the lady, as soon as the servant came within hearing distance.

Ann made no great preparations. She hastily adjusted a riding-skirt, put on her garden-hat, a wide-brimmed affair with a touch of blue in its make-up, and began to pace impatiently up and down. In a few minutes the negro came running, leading the horse at a swinging trot. By the time he reached the horse-block, Ann Briscoe was there also, and the next moment she was riding toward the Moseley place, almost as rapidly as the horse could go. The sweeping rush of the wind did her good, and the movements of the horse had a soothing effect upon her nerves.

She was soon in a position to see that even if Philip Moseley had read and gloated over the

confessions of her youth, no cataclysm had occurred. The Moseley house was still standing, as grim and as lonely as ever. No, not altogether lonely, for, though the blinds were tightly closed, there was Elviry wearing Uncle Bobuel's hat, and sweeping the front walk.

Elviry saw Miss Ann coming, and knew that trouble was brewing somewhere. Being a very excitable negro, she dropped the broom and ran to the gate.

"What de matter, Miss Ann? Name er goodness, what de matter?" cried Elviry.

"Hush!" responded the lady. "Don't talk so loud. How dare you send after those books when I was away? You've ruined me!" Her voice was charged with both indignation and grief.

"Why, Miss Ann, I thought de books wuz all right. I——"

"Didn't I tell you not to talk so loud?"

"Dey ain't nobody in de house. Marse Phil done gone off some'rs. He ain't never totch de books. Dey er layin' right whar I put um at."

"Go and bring them here." Miss Ann breathed easier. She soon had the precious diary in her hand. "I'll burn you," she cried, exultantly, shaking it before her face. "I'll *burn you* the minute I get home." Without another word, she went galloping away.

Elviry stood looking after the young woman until a bend in the road hid her from view. "Well, well, well!" said the negro woman, talking softly to herself. "Ef a angel fum heaven had come

down here an' tol' me dat Ann Briscoe had sump'n she wanter hide, er had sump'n wrong in dem 'count-books, I wouldn't 'a' b'lieved it—dat I wouldn't." She carried the books back in the house and tied them in bundle form again. "If anybody ax me what's de 'casion er all de ruination in de worl' I'll tell um it's money an' niggers. I'll say it anywhar!"

Just beyond the bend in the road which had hid Ann Briscoe from Elviry's eyes, there was a hill which commanded a view of pretty much all of the settlement. The houses that could not be seen were small and insignificant indeed. This hill, with the primitive forest on one side and cultivated or fallow land on the other, fell away to a valley in which there was a number of comfortable houses. Here lived Mr. William Dukes and his brother Tom, and not far away, Judge Barksdale had his home.

When Ann Briscoe reached the top of this hill, she saw three men. Two were walking together, and the third was moving toward them. As the figure of this third man was unfamiliar to her, Ann judged that it must be Philip Moseley, though he was too far away for his features to be clearly visible. On the right, in a piece of fallow land, a most unusual movement caught Ann's eye and arrested her attention. It was the stooping figure of a negro, running toward such cover as a clump of sassafras saplings would afford.

Ann Briscoe recognized the stooping figure as Flingin' Jim. Some instinct told her that trouble

was brewing. And this was indeed the case, for when the three men met in the road, there was a moment's pause, and then Philip Moseley proceeded to express his opinion of Messrs. William and Thomas Dukes in language that was more emphatic than refined. In short, Moseley employed terms which in the South (and, indeed, wherever men are amenable to insult) always mean a personal encounter.

Moseley had armed himself with a stout hickory, for he knew what to expect. But Mr. William Dukes was armed with a pistol, and this he attempted to draw, but Moseley was quicker, delivering a blow with his bludgeon which sent the man reeling. Meanwhile, Mr. Thomas Dukes made a rush at Moseley and the two clinched, engaging in a struggle which required all of Moseley's attention. In a moment Mr. William Dukes had recovered himself sufficiently to get his pistol out. He advanced close to the struggling men.

With a cry of warning on her lips, Ann Briscoe spurred her horse forward. What she hoped or intended to do she never knew. Whatever it was, she was too late for its performance, for as her horse plunged forward, she saw Flingin' Jim rush from behind the clump of bushes, whirl his body around and straighten his left arm quickly. Apparently responsive to these movements, Mr. William Dukes threw his arms out wildly, his pistol went off in the air, and he sank upon the ground.

By this time, Moseley had detached himself

from his antagonist, and by a few well-directed blows soon had him crying for quarter, so that when Ann Briscoe reached the scene, peace reigned direfully. Perceiving which, the young woman made no pause, except that occasioned by her horse, which shied when it came to the body of Mr. William Dukes. Ann was strong enough, but the sight of blood, together with the strain under which she had labored, was too much for her. Her face, which was white, grew whiter still when she looked at Moseley.

"Ann!" he cried; but she shook her head and rode on, and, when she reached home, went straight to her room and wept because she had not stopped and turned when his voice called her name.

Flingin' Jim, meantime, after he had gone through the singular performance which Ann Briscoe had witnessed, went running to Judge Barksdale's and informed that gentleman that a big fight was going on "down de big road 'twix' Marse Phil an' de Dukeses." Judge Barksdale, piloted by Flingin' Jim, hurried to the seat of war; but when he arrived, the trouble was over.

"Hello, Tom!" Judge Barksdale exclaimed, "you've got life in you. I'm a-feared your brother Bill's a-goner. Well, I've made two predictions in this settlement, and they've both panned out. One is that a man with a good hickory is equal to two armed men at close quarters; t'other is that Bill an' Tom Dukes would some day wake up the wrong passenger."

"You say that Bill Dukes is dead?" inquired Philip Moseley, with some concern.

"It strikes me that way," replied Mr. Barksdale, in a judicial tone.

"Why, I never hit the man but once, and he was on his feet some time after that. I heard a pistol go off, and seeing him fall in a heap, I thought he had accidentally shot himself."

"No, sir; there's a soft place on the side of his head here, jest about the size of a walnut. He must 'a' butted ag'in' the end of your hickory. Jim, run over to Doc' Dawson's and tell him to come here as hard as ever he can; and do you come back by Dukes's and tell some of the hands to hitch up some sort of a contrapment and come after the dead and wounded—if so be Bill is dead."

It was one of the peculiarities of Judge Barksdale that he was never flustered. Under all circumstances he was cool and self-contained.

"You fellers must have some good reason for this fracas," he remarked to Moseley; and when the latter told him briefly of the causes that led up to it, he took a pinch of snuff and nodded. "I endorse it as a human bein', but not as an officer of the law. And that's the reason you left your prop'ty hangin' in the air, is it? Well, it's a better reason than I thought you had, but it won't hold water. Young people in love are fools, and they never come to their senses till long after they are married. If you could ketch and spread out in a book all the unspoken thoughts that fly up the

chimbley-flue while married folks are settin', before the fire, you'd have a mighty interestin' volume."

"Is Bill dead?" asked Tom Dukes, who had been helped to a sitting posture by his late antagonist.

"It's more'n likely," replied Judge Barksdale; "but the Doctor'll tell us. I see him a-comin now."

"William's not dead," the physician remarked, after a careful examination. "But he may die. What was he hit with?"

Philip Moseley explained the affair.

The Doctor was a very inquisitive man. "Did anybody see the fight?" he asked. There was no answer to the question. "This wound on William is of the same kind and character as the one I found on that nigger tramp—you remember him, Judge Barksdale—that ran after Miss Ann Briscoe. The nigger never knew what hit him; he was dead before he quit running." That being the case, Mr. Barksdale could give a reasonable explanation of the mystery, but he remained silent. He happened to see an iron ball lying in a wagon-rut near the side of the road. It was, in fact, a grape-shot, one of the relics of the war that had found its way to that section. He changed his position so as to place his foot near the missile, dropped his knife, stooped to recover it, and transferred both knife and grape-shot to his pocket.

Mr. Tom Dukes was badly bruised, but not

seriously hurt, and was even able to help lift his brother into the light wagon that soon came. He surprised Philip Moseley by inviting him to go with the others to the Dukes' place.

"I ain't got a thing ag'in' ye in the world, Phil—not a thing. I've got some papers there that I want to give you wi' my own hands. Bill wanted me to burn 'em, an' I told 'im I had, but they're all there."

Those papers were the letters written by Moseley and Ann Briscoe to each other. There were six of them—three written by each—and they had never been opened. Those he had written to the young lady, Moseley bundled up and sent to her by Flingin' Jim, with this brief note:

"Dear Miss Ann: I send you three letters that you should have received long ago. What changes have taken place in your mind I have no means of knowing; but if the sending of them to you at this late day (they have just been recovered) is an act of impertinence, pray return them by the bearer."

After reading the note, Miss Ann questioned Flingin' Jim very closely, but in an indirect way, and thus discovered that the letters had been returned by Mr. Dukes.

"And how is Mr. William Dukes?" she inquired.

"He gittin' on mighty well, dey say."

Then he added: "I wuz too fur off. Dat clump of bushes whar I wuz at is mighty nigh two hundred yards fum de road—I done stepped it off. An' now dat man'll git up fum his bed, an'

he'll piroot 'roun' an' shoot Marse Phil in de back. Is dey any answer?" he asked.

"No; no answer." Miss Ann blushed as she spoke. She reread the note in her own room. "He must think," she said, with a smile of scorn, "that women are as changeable as men."

She read these letters with mingled emotions. They were the intimate confessions of a young man floundering about in the arms of love and romance, and their ardor brought to her cheeks a glow which took possession of that fair field and remained there. The last of the three created the deepest impression on her mind. It was the one in which he bade farewell to the dreams of love. It was melancholy but manly.

After going over the letters twice, Ann leaned her head on her hand, apparently in deep thought, and the burden of her reflections found voice. "I'd give a pretty to know what I wrote in *my* last letter. I'm sure it's something mean."

Not many hours elapsed before Philip Moseley came knocking at the Briscoe door, and Ann herself answered the summons. The man looked at the woman and held out his arms, and the woman ran to the sheltering embrace with a sigh of happiness and content.

Some weeks later, Flingin' Jim found his mammy picking a turkey. "Who dat turkey fer?" he asked.

"What you ax me dat fer, boy? You know Marse Phil ain't gwine ter let nobody but me cook de dinner fer de infair."

"Dat so; dey gwine ter marry ter-night. Well, suh! I like ter fergit it. I been huntin' fer my fool-killer, an' marryin' ain't been in my min'."

"Marse Barksdale come by an' lef' a ball fer you des now. He call it a grave-shot. It's in dar on de bed."

"It may be a grave-shot," replied Flingin' Jim, "but I calls it my fool-killer."

"Ef it fetch you ter de gallows I'll never tell folks dat 'twan't rightly named."

Flingin' Jim laughed, saying, "Yander go Marse Phil an' Miss Ann. Dey er sho mighty chummy."

"Dey got de right ter be," replied Elviry.

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

DECEMBER 9

THE STUDENT LIFE*

EXCEPT it be a lover, no one is more interesting as an object of study than a student. Shakespeare might have made him a fourth in his immortal group. The lunatic with his fixed idea, the poet with his fine frenzy, the lover with his frantic idolatry, and the student aflame with the desire for knowledge are of "imagination all compact." To an absorbing passion, a whole-souled devotion, must be joined an enduring energy if the student is to become a devotee of the gray-eyed goddess to whose law his services are bound. Like the quest of the Holy Grail, the quest of Minerva is not for all. For the one, the pure life; for the other, what Milton calls "a strong propensity of nature." Here again the student often resembles the poet—he is born, not made. While the resultant of two molding forces, the accidental, external conditions, and the hidden germinal energies, which produce in each one of us national, family, and individual traits, the true student possesses in some measure a divine spark which sets at naught their laws. Like the

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Snark, he defies definition, but there are three unmistakable signs by which you may recognize the genuine article from a Boojum—an absorbing desire to know the truth, an unswerving steadfastness in its pursuit, and an open, honest heart, free from suspicion, guile, and jealousy.

At the outset do not be worried about this big question—Truth. It is a very simple matter if each one of you starts with the desire to get as much as possible. No human being is constituted to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and even the best of men must be content with fragments, with partial glimpses, never the full fruition. In this unsatisfied quest the attitude of mind, the desire, the thirst—a thirst that from the soul must rise!—the fervent longing are the be-all and the end-all. What is the student but a lover courting a fickle mistress who ever eludes his grasp? In this very elusiveness is brought out his second great characteristic—steadfastness of purpose. Unless from the start the limitations incident to our frail human faculties are frankly accepted, nothing but disappointment awaits you. The truth is the best you can get with your best endeavor, the best that the best men accept—with this you must learn to be satisfied, retaining at the same time with due humility an earnest desire for an ever larger portion. Only by keeping the mind plastic and receptive does the student escape perdition. It is not, as Charles Lamb remarks, that some people do not know what to do with truth when it is

offered to them, but the tragic fate is to reach, after years of patient search, a condition of mind-blindness in which the truth is not recognized, though it stares you in the face. This can never happen to a man who has followed step by step the growth of a truth, and who knows the painful phases of its evolution. It is one of the great tragedies of life that every truth has to struggle to acceptance against honest but mind-blind students. Harvey knew his contemporaries well, and for twelve successive years demonstrated the circulation of the blood before daring to publish the facts on which the truth was based.[1]

Only steadfastness of purpose and humility enable the student to shift his position to meet the new conditions in which new truths are born, or old ones modified beyond recognition. And, thirdly, the honest heart will keep him in touch with his fellow students, and furnish that sense of comradeship without which he travels an arid waste alone. I say advisedly an honest heart—the honest head is prone to be cold and stern, given to judgment, not mercy, and not always able to entertain that true charity which, while it thinketh no evil, is anxious to put the best possible interpretation upon the motives of a fellow worker. It will foster, too, an attitude of generous, friendly rivalry untinged by the green peril, jealousy, that is the best preventive of the growth of a bastard

[1] "These views, as usual, pleased some more, others less; some chid and calumniated me, and laid it to me as a crime that I had dared to depart from the precepts and opinions of all Anatomists."—De Motu Cordis, chap. i.

scientific spirit, loving seclusion and working in a lock-and-key laboratory, as timorous of light as is a thief.

You have all become brothers in a great society, not apprentices, since that implies a master, and nothing should be further from the attitude of the teacher than much that is meant in that word, used though it be in another sense, particularly by our French brethren in a most delightful way, signifying a bond of intellectual filiation. A fraternal attitude is not easy to cultivate—the chasm between the chair and the bench is difficult to bridge. Two things have helped to put up a cantilever across the gulf. The successful teacher is no longer on a height, pumping knowledge at high pressure into passive receptacles. The new methods have changed all this. He is no longer Sir Oracle, perhaps unconsciously by his very manner antagonizing minds to whose level he cannot possibly descend, but he is a senior student anxious to help his juniors. When a simple, earnest spirit animates a college, there is no appreciable interval between the teacher and the taught—both are in the same class, the one a little more advanced than the other. So animated, the student feels that he has joined a family whose honor is his honor, whose welfare is his own, and whose interests should be his first consideration.

The hardest conviction to get into the mind of a beginner is that the education upon which he is engaged is not a college course, not a medical course, but a life course, for which the work of a few years

under teachers is but a preparation. Whether you will falter and fail in the race or whether you will be faithful to the end depends on the training before the start, and on your staying powers, points upon which I need not enlarge. You can all become good students, a few may become great students, and now and again one of you will be found who does easily and well what others cannot do at all, or very badly, which is John Ferriar's excellent definition of a genius.

In the hurry and bustle of a business world, which is the life of this continent, it is not easy to train first-class students. Under present conditions it is hard to get the needful seclusion, on which account it is that our educational market is so full of wayside fruit. I have always been much impressed by the advice of St. Chrysostom: "Depart from the highway and transplant thyself in some enclosed ground, for it is hard for a tree which stands by the wayside to keep her fruit till it be ripe." The dilettante is abroad in the land, the man who is always venturing on tasks for which he is imperfectly equipped, a habit of mind fostered by the multiplicity of subjects in the curriculum: and while many things are studied, few are studied thoroughly. Men will not take time to get to the heart of a matter. After all, concentration is the price the modern student pays for success. Thoroughness is the most difficult habit to acquire, but it is the pearl of great price, worth all the worry and trouble of the search. The dilettante lives an easy, butterfly life, know-

ing nothing of the toil and labor with which the treasures of knowledge are dug out of the past, or wrung by patient research in the laboratories. Take, for example, the early history of this country—how easy for the student of the one type to get a smattering, even a fairly full acquaintance with the events of the French and Spanish settlements. Put an original document before him, and it might as well be Arabic. What we need is the other type, the man who knows the records, who, with a broad outlook and drilled in what may be called the embryology of history, has yet a powerful vision for the minutiæ of life. It is these kitchen and backstair men who are to be encouraged, the men who know the subject in hand in all possible relationships. Concentration has its drawbacks. It is possible to become so absorbed in the problem of the "enclitic δε," or the structure of the flagella of the Trichomonas, or of the toes of the prehistoric horse, that the student loses the sense of proportion in his work, and even wastes a lifetime in researches which are valueless because not in touch with current knowledge. You remember poor Casaubon, in "Middle-march," whose painful scholarship was lost on this account. The best preventive to this is to get denationalized early. The true student is a citizen of the world, the allegiance of whose soul, at any rate, is too precious to be restricted to a single country. The great minds, the great works transcend all limitations of time, of language, and of race, and the scholar can never

feel initiated into the company of the elect until he can approach all of life's problems from the cosmopolitan standpoint. I care not in what subject he may work, the full knowledge cannot be reached without drawing on supplies from lands other than his own—French, English, German, American, Japanese, Russian, Italian—there must be no discrimination by the loyal student who should willingly draw from any and every source with an open mind and a stern resolve to render unto all their dues. I care not on what stream of knowledge he may embark, follow up its course, and the rivulets that feed it flow from many lands. If the work is to be effective he must keep in touch with scholars in other countries. How often has it happened that years of precious time have been given to a problem already solved or shown to be insoluble, because of the ignorance of what had been done elsewhere. And it is not only book knowledge and journal knowledge, but a knowledge of men that is needed. The student will, if possible, see the men in other lands. Travel not only widens the vision and gives certainties in place of vague surmises, but the personal contact with foreign workers enables him to appreciate better the failings or successes in his own line of work, perhaps to look with more charitable eyes on the work of some brother whose limitations and opportunities have been more restricted than his own. Or, in contact with a master mind, he may take fire, and the glow of the enthusiasm may be the inspiration of his life. Concentration

must then be associated with large views on the relation of the problem, and a knowledge of its status elsewhere; otherwise it may land him in the slough of a specialism so narrow that it has depth and no breadth, or he may be led to make what he believes to be important discoveries, but which have long been current coin in other lands. It is sad to think that the day of the great polymathic student is at an end; that we may, perhaps, never again see a Scaliger, a Haller, or a Humboldt—men who took the whole field of knowledge for their domain, and viewed it as from a pinnacle. And yet a great specializing generalist may arise, who can tell? Some twentieth-century Aristotle may be now tugging at his bottle, as little dreaming as are his parents or his friends of a conquest of the mind, beside which the wonderful victories of the Stagirite will look pale. The value of a really great student to the country is equal to half-a-dozen grain elevators or a new transcontinental railway. He is a commodity singularly fickle and variable, and not to be grown to order. So far as his advent is concerned there is no telling when or where he may arise. The conditions seem to be present even under the most unlikely externals. Some of the greatest students this country has produced have come from small villages and country places. It is impossible to predict from a study of the environment, which a "strong propensity of nature," to quote Milton's phrase again, will easily bend or break.

The student must be allowed full freedom in his

work, undisturbed by the utilitarian spirit of the Philistine, who cries, Cui bono? and distrusts pure science. The present remarkable position in applied science and in industrial trades of all sorts has been made possible by men who did pioneer work in chemistry, in physics, in biology, and in physiology, without a thought in their researches of any practical application. The members of this higher group of productive students are rarely understood by the common spirits, who appreciate as little their unselfish devotion as their unworldly neglect of the practical side of the problems.

Everywhere now the medical student is welcomed as an honored member of the guild. There was a time, I confess, and it is within the memory of some of us, when, like Falstaff, he was given to "taverns and sack and wine and metheglins, and to drinkings and swearings and starings, pribbles and prabbles"; but all that has changed with the curriculum, and the "Meds" now roar you as gently as the "Theologs." On account of the peculiar character of the subject-matter of your studies, what I have said upon the general life and mental attitude of the student applies with tenfold force to you. Man, with all his mental and bodily anomalies and diseases—the machine in order, the machine in disorder, and the business yours to put it to rights. Through all the phases of its career this most complicated mechanism of this wonderful world will be the subject of our study and of your care—the naked, new-born

infant, the artless child, the lad and the lassie just aware of the tree of knowledge overhead, the strong man in the pride of life, the woman with the benediction of maternity on her brow, and the aged, peaceful in the contemplation of the past. Almost everything has been renewed in the science and in the art of medicine, but all through the long centuries there has been no variableness or shadow of change in the essential features of the life which is our contemplation and our care. The sick love-child of Israel's sweet singer, the plague-stricken hopes of the great Athenian statesman, Elpenor, bereft of his beloved Artemidora, and "Tully's daughter mourned so tenderly," are not of any age or any race—they are here with us to-day, with the Hamlets, the Ophelias, and the Lears. Amid an eternal heritage of sorrow and suffering our work is laid, and this eternal note of sadness would be insupportable if the daily tragedies were not relieved by the spectacle of the heroism and devotion displayed by the actors. Nothing will sustain you more potently than the power to recognize in your humdrum routine, as perhaps it may be thought, the true poetry of life—the poetry of the commonplace, of the ordinary man, of the plain, toilworn woman, with their loves and their joys, their sorrows and their griefs. The comedy, too, of life will be spread before you, and nobody laughs more often than the doctor at the pranks Puck plays upon the Titanias and the Bottoms among his patients. The humorous side is really almost

as frequently turned toward him as the tragic. Lift up one hand to heaven and thank your stars if they have given you the proper sense to enable you to appreciate the inconceivably droll situations in which we catch our fellow creatures. Unhappily, this is one of the free gifts of the gods, unevenly distributed, not bestowed on all, or on all in equal portions. In undue measure it is not without risk, and in any case in the doctor it is better appreciated by the eye than expressed on the tongue. Hilarity and good humor, a breezy cheerfulness, a nature "sloping toward the southern side," as Lowell has it, help enormously both in the study and in the practice of medicine. To many of a somber and sour disposition it is hard to maintain good spirits amid the trials and tribulations of the day, and yet it is an unpardonable mistake to go about among patients with a long face.

Divide your attentions equally between books and men. The strength of the student of books is to sit still—two or three hours at a stretch—eating the heart out of a subject with pencil and notebook in hand, determined to master the details and intricacies, focussing all your energies on its difficulties. Get accustomed to test all sorts of book problems and statements for yourself, and take as little as possible on trust. The Hunterian "Do not think, but try" attitude of mind is the important one to cultivate. The question came up one day, when discussing the grooves left on the nails after fever, how long it took for the nails

to grow out, from root to edge. A majority of the class had no further interest; a few looked it up in books; two men marked their nails at the root with nitrate of silver, and a few months later had positive knowledge on the subject. They showed the proper spirit. The little points that come up in your reading try to test for yourselves. With one fundamental difficulty many of you will have to contend from the outset—a lack of proper preparation for really hard study. No one can have watched successive groups of young men pass through the special schools without profoundly regretting the haphazard, fragmentary character of their preliminary education. It does seem too bad that we cannot have a student in his eighteenth year sufficiently grounded in the humanities and in the sciences preliminary to medicine—but this is an educational problem upon which only a Milton or a Locke could discourse with profit. With pertinacity you can overcome the preliminary defects and once thoroughly interested, the work in books becomes a pastime. A serious drawback in the student life is the self-consciousness, bred of too close devotion to books. A man gets shy, "dysopic," as old Timothy Bright calls it, and shuns the looks of men, and blushes like a girl.

The strength of a student of men is to travel—to study men, their habits, character, mode of life, their behavior under varied conditions, their vices, virtues, and peculiarities. Begin with a careful observation of your fellow students and of your

teachers; then, every patient you see is a lesson in much more than the malady from which he suffers. Mix as much as you possibly can with the outside world, and learn its ways. Cultivated systematically, the student societies, the students' union, the gymnasium, and the outside social circle will enable you to conquer the diffidence so apt to go with bookishness and which may prove a very serious drawback in after-life. I cannot too strongly impress upon the earnest and attentive men among you the necessity of overcoming this unfortunate failing in your student days. It is not easy for every one to reach a happy medium, and the distinction between a proper self-confidence and "cheek," particularly in junior students, is not always to be made. The latter is met with chiefly among the student pilgrims who, in traveling down the Delectable Mountains, have gone astray and have passed to the left hand, where lieth the country of Conceit, the country in which you remember the brisk lad Ignorance met Christian.

I wish we could encourage on this continent among our best students the habit of wandering. I do not know that we are quite prepared for it, as there is still great diversity in the curricula, even among the leading schools, but it is undoubtedly a great advantage to study under different teachers, as the mental horizon is widened and the sympathies enlarged. The practice would do much to lessen that narrow "I am of Paul and

I am of Apollos" spirit which is hostile to the best interests of the profession.

There is much that I would like to say on the question of work, but I can spare only a few moments for a word or two. Who will venture to settle upon so simple a matter as the best time for work? One will tell us there is no best time; all are equally good; and truly, all times are the same to a man whose soul is absorbed in some great problem. The other day I asked Edward Martin, the well-known story-writer, what time he found best for work. "Not in the evening, and never between meals!" was his answer, which may appeal to some of my hearers. One works best at night; another, in the morning; a majority of the students of the past favor the latter. Erasmus, the great exemplar, says, "Never work at night; it dulls the brain and hurts the health." One day, going with George Ross through Bedlam, Doctor Savage, at that time the physician in charge, remarked upon two great groups of patients—those who were depressed in the morning and those who were cheerful, and he suggested that the spirits rose and fell with the bodily temperature—those with very low morning temperatures were depressed and vice versa. This, I believe, expresses a truth which may explain the extraordinary difference in the habits of students in this matter of the time at which the best work can be done. Outside of the asylum there are also the two great types, the student-lark who loves to see the sun

rise, who comes to breakfast with a cheerful morning face, never so "fit" as at 6 A. M. We all know the type. What a contrast to the student-owl with his saturnine morning face, thoroughly unhappy, cheated by the wretched breakfast bell of the two best hours of the day for sleep, no appetite, and permeated with an unspeakable hostility to his vis-à-vis, whose morning garrulity and good humor are equally offensive. Only gradually as the day wears on and his temperature rises, does he become endurable to himself and to others. But see him really awake at 10 P. M. while our blithe lark is in hopeless coma over his books, from which it is hard to rouse him sufficiently to get his boots off for bed, our lean owl-friend, Saturn no longer in the ascendant, with bright eyes and cheery face, is ready for four hours of anything you wish—deep study, or

Heart affluence in discoursive talk,

and by 2 A. M. he will undertake to unsphere the spirit of Plato. In neither a virtue, in neither a fault we must recognize these two types of students, differently constituted, owing possibly —though I have but little evidence for the belief —to thermal peculiarities.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER.

DECEMBER 10

THE SNOWSTORM

TOWARD the end of the year 1811, a memorable period for us, the good Gavril Gavrilovitch R—— was living on his domain of Nenaradova. He was celebrated throughout the district for his hospitality and kind-heartedness. The neighbors were constantly visiting him: some to eat and drink; some to play at five copeck "Boston" with his wife, Praskovia Petrovna; and some to look at their daughter, Maria Gavrilovna, a pale, slender girl of seventeen. She was considered a wealthy match, and many desired her for themselves or for their sons.

Maria Gavrilovna had been brought up on French novels, and, consequently, was in love. The object of her choice was a poor sub-lieutenant in the army, who was then on leave of absence in his village. It need scarcely be mentioned that the young man returned her passion with equal ardor, and that the parents of his beloved one, observing their mutual inclination, forbade their daughter to think of him, and received him worse than a discharged assessor.

Our lovers corresponded with each other, and, in the little pine wood or near the old chapel,

daily saw each other alone. There they exchanged vows of eternal love, lamented their cruel fate, and formed various plans. Corresponding and conversing in this way, they arrived quite naturally at the following conclusion:

If we cannot exist without each other, and the will of hard-hearted parents stands in the way of our happiness, why cannot we do without them?

Needless to mention that this happy idea originated in the mind of the young man, and that it was very congenial to the romantic imagination of Maria Gavrilovna.

The winter came and put a stop to their meetings, but their correspondence became all the more active. Vladimir Nikolaievitch in every letter implored her to give herself up to him, to get married secretly, to hide for some time, and then throw themselves at the feet of their parents, who would, without any doubt, be touched at last by the heroic constancy and unhappiness of the lovers, and would infallibly say to them, "Children, come to our arms!"

Maria Gavrilovna hesitated for a long time, and several plans for a flight were rejected. At last, she consented: on the appointed day, she was not to take supper, but was to retire to her room under the pretext of a headache. Her maid was in the plot; they were both to go into the garden by the back stairs, and, behind the garden, they would find ready a sledge, into which they were to get, and then drive straight to the church of Jadrino, a village about five versts from

Nenaradova, where Vladimir would be waiting for them.

On the eve of the decisive day, Maria Gavrilovna did not sleep the whole night; she packed and tied up her linen and other articles of apparel, wrote a long letter to a sentimental young lady, a friend of hers, and another to her parents. She took leave of them in the most touching terms, urged the invincible strength of passion as an excuse for the step she was taking, and wound up with the assurance that she should consider it the happiest moment of her life when she should be allowed to throw herself at the feet of her dear parents.

After having sealed both letters with a Toula seal, upon which were engraved two flaming hearts with a suitable inscription, she threw herself upon her bed just before daybreak, and dozed off; but, even then, she was constantly being awakened by terrible dreams. First, it seemed to her that, at the very moment when she seated herself in the sledge, in order to go and get married, her father stopped her, dragged her over the snow with fearful rapidity, and threw her into a dark, bottomless abyss, down which she fell headlong with an indescribable sinking of the heart. Then she saw Vladimir lying on the grass, pale and blood-stained. With his dying breath, he implored her in a piercing voice to make haste and marry him. Other wild and fantastic visions floated before her, one after another. At last, she arose, paler than usual, and with a genuine

headache. Her father and mother observed her uneasiness; their tender solicitude and incessant inquiries, "What is the matter with you, Masha? Are you ill, Masha?" cut her to the heart. She tried to reassure them and to appear cheerful; but in vain.

The evening came. The thought that this was the last day she would pass in the bosom of her family weighed upon her heart. She was more dead than alive. In secret she took leave of everybody, of all the objects that surrounded her.

Supper was served; her heart began to beat violently. In a trembling voice, she declared that she did not want any supper, and then took leave of her father and mother. They kissed her and blessed her as usual, and she could hardly restrain herself from weeping.

On reaching her own room, she threw herself into a chair and burst into tears. Her maid urged her to be calm and to take courage. Everything was ready. In half an hour, Masha would leave forever her parents' house, her room, and her peaceful girlish life.

Out in the courtyard, the snow was falling heavily; the wind howled, the shutters shook and rattled, and everything seemed to her to portend misfortune.

Soon all was quiet in the house: every one was asleep. Masha wrapped herself in a shawl, put on a warm cloak, took her small box in her hand, and went down the back staircase. Her maid

followed her with two bundles. They descended into the garden. The snowstorm had not subsided; the wind blew in their faces, as if trying to stop the young criminal. With difficulty, they reached the end of the garden. In the road, a sledge awaited them. The horses, half-frozen with the cold, would not keep still; Vladimir's coachman was walking up and down in front of them, trying to restrain their impatience. He helped the young lady and her maid into the sledge, placed the box and the bundles in the vehicle, seized the reins, and the horses dashed off.

Having intrusted the young lady to the care of fate and to the skill of Tereshka, the coachman, we will return to our young lover.

Vladimir had spent the whole of the day in driving about. In the morning, he paid a visit to the priest of Jadrino, and, having come to an agreement with him after a great deal of difficulty, he then set out to seek for witnesses among the neighboring land-owners. The first to whom he presented himself, a retired cornet of about forty years of age, and whose name was Dravin, consented with pleasure. The adventure, he declared, reminded him of his young days and his pranks in the hussars. He persuaded Vladimir to stay to dinner with him, and assured him that he would have no difficulty in finding the other two witnesses. And, indeed, immediately after dinner appeared the surveyor Schmidt, with moustache and spurs, and the son of the captain of police, a lad of sixteen years of age,

who had recently entered the lancers. They not only accepted Vladimir's proposal, but even vowed that they were ready to sacrifice their lives for him. Vladimir embraced them with rapture, and returned home to get everything ready.

It had been dark for some time. He despatched his faithful Tereshka to Nenaradova with his sledge and with detailed instructions, and ordered for himself the small sledge with one horse, and set out alone, without any coachman, for Jadrino, where Maria Gavrilovna ought to arrive in about a couple of hours. He knew the road well, and the journey would only occupy about twenty minutes altogether.

But scarcely had Vladimir issued from the paddock into the open field, when the wind rose, and such a snowstorm came on that he could see nothing. In one minute the road was completely hidden; all surrounding objects disappeared in a thick yellow fog, through which fell the white flakes of snow; earth and sky became confounded. Vladimir found himself in the middle of the field, and tried in vain to find the road again. His horse went on at random, and at every moment kept either stepping into a snowdrift or stumbling into a hole, so that the sledge was constantly being overturned. Vladimir endeavored not to lose the right direction. But it seemed to him that more than half an hour had already passed, and he had not yet reached the Jadrino wood. Another ten minutes elapsed—still no wood was to be seen. Vladimir drove across a field intersected by

deep ditches. The snowstorm did not abate; the sky did not become any clearer. The horse began to grow tired, and the perspiration rolled from him in great drops, in spite of the fact that he was constantly being half-buried in the snow.

At last, Vladimir perceived that he was going in the wrong direction. He stopped, began to think, to recollect, and compare, and he felt convinced that he ought to have turned to the right. He turned to the right now. His horse could scarcely move forward. He had now been on the road for more than an hour. Jadrino could not be far off. But on and on he went, and still no end to the field—nothing but snowdrifts and ditches. The sledge was constantly being overturned, and as constantly being set right again. The time was passing. Vladimir began to grow seriously uneasy.

At last, something dark appeared in the distance. Vladimir directed his course toward it. On drawing near, he perceived that it was a wood.

"Thank Heaven!" he thought, "I am not far off now."

He drove along by the edge of the wood, hoping by-and-by to fall upon the well-known road or to pass round the wood: Jadrino was situated just behind it. He soon found the road, and plunged into the darkness of the wood, now denuded of leaves by the winter. The wind could not rage here; the road was smooth; the horse recovered courage, and Vladimir felt reassured.

But he drove on and on, and Jadrino was not

to be seen; there was no end to the wood. Vladimir discovered with horror that he had entered an unknown forest. Despair took possession of him. He whipped the horse; the poor animal broke into a trot, but it soon slackened its pace and in about a quarter of an hour it was scarcely able to drag one leg after the other, in spite of all the exertions of the unfortunate Vladimir.

Gradually the trees began to get sparser, and Vladimir emerged from the forest; but Jadrino was not to be seen. It must now have been about midnight. Tears gushed from his eyes; he drove on at random. Meanwhile, the storm had subsided, the clouds dispersed, and before him lay a level plain covered with a white, undulating carpet. The night was tolerably clear. He saw, not far off, a little village, consisting of four or five houses. Vladimir drove toward it. At the first cottage, he jumped out of the sledge, ran to the window, and began to knock. After a few minutes the wooden shutter was raised and an old man thrust out his gray beard.

"What do you want?"

"Is Jadrino far from here?"

"Is Jadrino far from here?"

"Yes, yes! Is it far?"

"Not far; about ten versts."

At this reply, Vladimir grasped his hair, and stood motionless like a man condemned to death.

"Where do you come from?" continued the old man.

Vladimir had not the courage to answer the question.

"Listen, old man," said he; "can you procure me horses to take me Jadrino?"

"How should we have such things as horses?" replied the peasant.

"Can I obtain a guide? I will pay him whatever he pleases."

"Wait," said the old man, closing the shutter; "I will send my son out to you; he will guide you."

Vladimir waited. But a minute had scarcely elapsed when he began knocking again. The shutter was raised, and the beard again appeared.

"What do you want?"

"What about your son?"

"He'll be out presently; he is putting on his boots. Are you cold? Come in and warm yourself."

"Thank you; send your son out quickly."

The door creaked: a lad came out with a cudgel and went on in front, at one time pointing out the road, at another searching for it among the drifted snow.

"What is the time?" Vladimir asked him.

"It will soon be daylight," replied the young peasant. Vladimir spoke not another word.

The cocks were crowing and it was already light when they reached Jadrino. The church was closed. Vladimir paid the guide, and drove into the priest's courtyard. His sledge was not there. What news awaited him!

But let us return to the worthy proprietors of Nenaradova, and see what is happening there.

Nothing.

The old people awoke, and went into the parlor, Gavril Gavrilovitch in a night-cap and flannel doublet, Praskovia Petrovna in a wadded dressing-gown. The tea-urn was brought in, and Gavril Gavrilovitch sent a servant to ask Maria Gavrilovna how she was and how she had passed the night. The servant returned, saying that the young lady had not slept very well, but that she felt better now, and that she would come down presently into the parlor. And, indeed, the door opened, and Maria Gavrilovna entered the room, and wished her father and mother good morning.

"How is your head, Masha?" asked Gavril Gavrilovitch.

"Better, Papa," replied Masha.

"Very likely you inhaled the fumes from the charcoal yesterday," said Praskovia Petrovna.

"Very likely, Mamma," replied Masha.

The day passed happily enough, but in the night Masha was taken ill. A doctor was sent for from the town. He arrived in the evening, and found the sick girl delirious. A violent fever ensued, and for two weeks the poor patient hovered on the brink of the grave.

Nobody in the house knew anything about her flight. The letters written by her the evening before had been burnt; and her maid, dreading the wrath of her master, had not whispered a

word about it to anybody. The priest, the retired cornet, the moustached surveyor, and the little lancer were discreet, and not without reason. Fereshka, the coachman, never uttered one word too much about it, even when he was drunk. Thus the secret was kept by more than half-a-dozen conspirators.

But Maria Gavrilovna herself divulged her secret during her delirious ravings. But her words were so disconnected that her mother, who never left her bedside, could understand from them only that her daughter was deeply in love with Vladimir Nikolaievitch, and that, probably, love was the cause of her illness. She consulted her husband and some of her neighbors, and at last it was unanimously decided that such was evidently Maria Gavrilovna's fate, that a woman cannot ride away from the man who is destined to be her husband, that poverty is not a crime, that one does not marry wealth, but a man, etc. Moral proverbs are wonderfully useful in those cases where we can invent little in our own justification.

In the meantime, the young lady began to recover. Vladimir had not been seen for a long time in the house of Gavril Gavrilovitch. He was afraid of the usual reception. It was resolved to send and announce to him an unexpected piece of good news: the consent of Maria's parents to his marriage with their daughter. But what was the astonishment of the proprietor of Nenaradova, when, in reply to their invitation, they received from him a half-insane letter. He in-

formed them he would never set foot in their house again, and begged them to forget an unhappy creature whose only hope was in death. A few days afterward they heard that Vladimir had joined the army again. This was in the year 1812.

For a long time, they did not dare to announce this to Masha, who was now convalescent. She never mentioned the name of Vladimir. Some months afterward, finding his name in the list of those who had distinguished themselves and been severely wounded at Borodino, she fainted away, and it was feared that she would have another attack of fever. But, Heaven be thanked! the fainting fit had no serious consequences.

Another misfortune fell upon her: Gavril Gavrilovitch died, leaving her the heiress to all his property. But the inheritance did not console her; she shared sincerely the grief of poor Praskovia Petrovna, vowing that she would never leave her. They both quitted Nenaradova, the scene of so many sad recollections, and went to live on another estate.

Suitors crowded round the young and wealthy heiress, but she gave not the slightest hope to any of them. Her mother sometimes exhorted her to make a choice; but Maria Gavrilovna shook her head, and became pensive. Vladimir no longer existed: he had died in Moscow on the eve of the entry of the French. His memory seemed to be held sacred by Masha; at least, she treasured up everything that could remind her of him —books that he had once read, his drawings, his

notes and verses of poetry that he had copied out for her. The neighbors, hearing of all this, were astonished at her constancy, and awaited with curiosity the hero who should at last triumph over the melancholy fidelity of this virgin Artemisia.

Meanwhile, the war had ended gloriously. Our regiments returned from abroad, and the people went out to meet them. The bands played the conquering song, "*Vive Henri-Quatre*," Tyrolese waltzes, and airs from "*Joconde*." Officers, who had set out for the war almost mere lads, returned grown men, with martial air, and breasts decorated with crosses. The soldiers chatted gayly among themselves, constantly mingling French and German words in their speech. Time never to be forgotten! Time of glory and enthusiasm! How throbbed the Russian heart at the word "Fatherland!" How sweet were the tears of meeting! With what unanimity did we commingle feelings of national pride with love for the Czar! And for him—what a moment!

The women, the Russian women, were then incomparable. Their usual coldness disappeared. Their enthusiasm was truly intoxicating, when, welcoming the conquerors, they cried "Hurrah!"

What officer of that time does not confess that, to the Russian women, he was indebted for his best and most precious reward?

At this brilliant period, Maria Gavrilovna was living with her mother in the province of—— and did not see how both capitals celebrated the

return of the troops. But, in the districts and villages, the general enthusiasm was, if possible, even still greater. The appearance of an officer in those places was for him a veritable triumph, and the lover in a plain coat felt very ill at ease in his vicinity.

We have already said that, in spite of her coldness, Maria Gavrilovna was, as before, surrounded by suitors. But all had to retire into the background when the wounded Colonel Bourmin of the hussars, with the order of St. George in his buttonhole, and with an "interesting pallor," as the young ladies of the neighborhood observed, appeared at the castle. He was about twenty-six years of age. He had obtained leave of absence to visit his estate, which was contiguous to that of Maria Gavrilovna. Maria bestowed special attention upon him. In his presence, her habitual pensiveness disappeared. It cannot be said that she coquetted with him, but a poet, observing her behavior, would have said:

"Se amor non è, che dunque ?"

Bourmin was indeed a very charming young man. He possessed that spirit which is eminently pleasing to women: a spirit of decorum and observation, without any pretensions, and yet not without a slight tendency toward careless satire. His behavior toward Maria Gavrilovna was simple and frank, but whatever she said or did, his soul and eyes followed her. He seemed to be of a quiet and modest disposition, though report said that he had once been a terrible rake, but this did not injure

him in the opinion of Maria Gavrilovna, who—like all young ladies in general—excused with pleasure follies that gave indication of boldness and ardor of temperament.

But more than everything else—more than his tenderness, more than his agreeable conversation, more than his interesting pallor, more than his arm in a sling—the silence of the young hussar excited her curiosity and imagination. She could not but confess that he pleased her very much; probably he, too, with his perception and experience, had already observed that she made a distinction between him and others; how was it then that she had not yet seen him at her feet or heard his declaration? What restrained him? Was it timidity, inseparable from true love, or pride, or the coquetry of a crafty wooer? It was an enigma to her. After long reflection, she came to the conclusion that timidity alone was the cause of it, and she resolved to encourage him by greater attention and, if circumstances should render it necessary, even by an exhibition of tenderness. She prepared a most unexpected *dénouement*, and waited with impatience for the moment of the romantic explanation. A secret of whatever nature it may be always presses heavily upon the female heart. Her stratagem had the desired success; at least, Bourmin fell into such a reverie, and his black eyes rested with such fire upon her, that the decisive moment seemed close at hand. The neighbors spoke about the marriage as if it were a matter already decided upon, and good

Praskovia Petrovna rejoiced that her daughter had at last found a lover worthy of her.

On one occasion, the old lady was sitting alone in the parlor, amusing herself with a pack of cards, when Bourmin entered the room, and immediately inquired for Maria Gavrilovna.

"She is in the garden," replied the old lady; "go out to her, and I will wait here for you."

Bourmin went, and the old lady made the sign of the cross and thought, "Perhaps the business will be settled to-day!"

Bourmin found Maria Gavrilovna near the pond, under a willow tree, with a book in her hands, and in white dress—a veritable heroine of romance. After the first few questions and observations, Maria Gavrilovna purposely allowed the conversation to drop, thereby increasing their mutual embarrassment, from which there was no possible way of escape except only by a sudden and decisive declaration.

And this is what happened: Bourmin, feeling the difficulty of his position, declared that he had long sought for an opportunity to open his heart to her, and requested a moment's attention. Maria Gavrilovna closed her book and cast down her eyes, as a sign of compliance with his request.

"I love you," said Bourmin: "I love you passionately."

Maria Gavrilovna blushed, and lowered her head still more. "I have acted imprudently in accustoming myself to the sweet pleasure of seeing and hearing you daily,"—Maria Gavrilovna re-

called to mind the first letter of St. Preux—"but it is now too late to resist my fate; the remembrance of you, your dear incomparable image, will henceforth be the torment and the consolation of my life, but there still remains a grave duty for me to perform—to reveal to you a terrible secret which will place between us an insurmountable barrier."

"That barrier has always existed," interrupted Maria Gavrilovna hastily: "I could never be your wife."

"I know," replied he calmly, "I know that you once loved, but death and three years of mourning —— Dear, kind Maria Gavrilovna, do not try to deprive me of my last consolation: the thought that you would have consented to make me happy if——"

"Don't speak, for Heaven's sake, don't speak. You torture me."

"Yes, I know, I feel that you would have been mine, but—I am the most miserable creature under the sun—I am already married!"

Maria Gavrilovna looked at him in astonishment.

"I am already married," continued Bourmin; "I have been married four years, but I do not know who is my wife, or where she is, or whether I shall ever see her again!"

"What do you say?" exclaimed Maria Gavrilovna. "How very strange! Continue: I will relate to you afterward—— But continue, I beg of you."

"At the beginning of the year 1812," said

Bourmin, "I was hastening to Vilna, where my regiment was stationed. Arriving late one evening at one of the post-stations, I ordered the horses to be got ready as quickly as possible, when suddenly a terrible snowstorm came on, and the postmaster and drivers advised me to wait till it had passed over. I followed their advice, but an unaccountable uneasiness took possession of me: it seemed as if some one were pushing me forward. Meanwhile, the snowstorm did not subside; I could endure it no longer, and again ordering out the horses, I started off in the midst of the storm. The driver conceived the idea of following the course of the river, which would shorten our journey by three versts. The banks were covered with snow: the driver drove past the place where we should have come out upon the road, and so we found ourselves in an unknown part of the country. The storm did not cease; I saw a light in the distance, and I ordered the driver to proceed toward it. We reached a village; in the wooden church, there was a light. The church was open. Outside the railings stood several sledges, and people were passing in and out through the porch.

"'This way! this way!' cried several voices.

"I ordered the driver to proceed.

"'In the name of Heaven, where have you been loitering?' said somebody to me. 'The bride has fainted away; the pope does not know what to do, and we were just getting ready to go back. Get out as quickly as you can.'

"I got out of the sledge without saying a word, and went into the church, which was feebly lit up by two or three tapers. A young girl was sitting on a bench in a dark corner of the church; another girl was rubbing her temples.

"'Thank God!' said the latter, 'you have come at last. You have almost killed the young lady.'

"The old priest advanced toward me, and said,

"'Do you wish me to begin?'

"'Begin, begin, father,' replied I, absently.

"The young girl was raised up. She seemed to me not at all bad-looking. Impelled by an incomprehensible, unpardonable levity, I placed myself by her side in front of the pulpit; the priest hurried on; three men and a chambermaid supported the bride, and occupied themselves only with her. We were married.

"'Kiss each other!' said the witness to us.

"My wife turned her pale face toward me. I was about to kiss her, when she exclaimed: 'Oh! it is not he! it is not he!' and fell senseless.

"The witnesses gazed at me in alarm. I turned round, and left the church without the least hindrance, flung myself into the *kibitka*, and cried, 'Drive off!'"

"My God!" exclaimed Maria Gavrilovna. "And you do not know what became of your poor wife?"

"I do not know," replied Bourmin; "neither do I know the name of the village where I was married, nor the post-station where I set out from. At that time, I attached so little importance to my

wicked prank that, on leaving the church, I fell asleep, and did not awake till the next morning, after reaching the third station. The servant who was then with me died during the campaign, so that I have no hope of ever discovering the woman upon whom I played such a cruel joke, and who is now so cruelly avenged."

"My God! my God!" cried Maria Gavrilovna, seizing him by the hand: "then it was you! And you do not recognize me?"

Bourmin turned pale—and threw himself at her feet.

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN.

DECEMBER 11

HORATIUS

A Lay Made About the Year of the City CCCLX

I

LARS PORSENA of Clusium
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

II

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

III

The horsemen and the footmen
  Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place;
  From many a fruitful plain;
From many a lonely hamlet,
  Which, bid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
  Of purple Apennine;

IV

From lordly Volaterræ,
  Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
  For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
  Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
  Fringing the southern sky;

V

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
  Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
  Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
  Through corn and vines and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
  Her diadem of towers.

VI

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

VII

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminia hill;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharmed the waterfowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

VIII

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap,
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

IX

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

X

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven:
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome:
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome."

XI

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men:
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

XII

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

XIII

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

XIV

For aged folks on crutches,
And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sunburnt husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

XV

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

XVI

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky,
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

XVII

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house nor fence nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

XVIII

Iwis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

XIX

They held a council standing
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
"The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Naught else can save the town."

XX

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

XXI

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

XXII

And plainly, and more plainly
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

XXIII

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo.
There Cilnius of Arretium

On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the fourfold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield.
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

XXIV

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

XXV

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed.
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

XXVI

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.

"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?"

XXVII

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

XXVIII

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

XXIX

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.

In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

XXX

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

XXXI

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold.
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

XXXII

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great;

Then lands were fairly portioned;
  Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
  In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman
  More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
  And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
  In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
  In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
  Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
  To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons
  Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
  And loosed the props below.

XXXV

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
  Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
  Of a broad sea of gold.

Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

XXXVI

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose;
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way;

XXXVII

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that gray crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

XXXVIII

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

XXXIX

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

XL

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!

No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice accursed sail."

XLI

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

XLII

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

XLIII

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.

Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?"

XLIV

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

XLV

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild-cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet,
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a handbreadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

XLVI

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.

Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

XLVII

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?"

XLVIII

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath and shame and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

XLIX

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three:

And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

L

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried "Forward!"
And those before cried "Back!"
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

LI

Yet one man for one moment
Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud,
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome."

LII

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread;
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

LIII

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all.
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

LIV

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

LV

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream;
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

LVI

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

LVII

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

LVIII

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

LIX

"O Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back
Plunged headlong in the tide.

LX

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

LXI

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing,
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

LXII

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing-place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.

LXIII

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
"Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
"And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."

LXIV

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

LXV

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

LXVI

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LXVII

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

LXVIII

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north-winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

LXIX

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets.
And the lads are shaping bows;

LXX

When the goodman mends his armor,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom,—
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

THOMAS B. MACAULAY.

DECEMBER 12

(Gustave Flaubert, born December 12, 1821)

THE WEDDING OF MADAME BOVARY

THE invited guests arrived early in carriages, covered conveyances with one horse, two-wheeled cars, old cabs minus their hoods, tilted carts with leather curtains, and the young folk of the most closely neighboring villages in light carts, in which they stood in a row, holding on with their hands to the sides to keep themselves from falling as they came along at a trot with great jolting. People came from ten miles off—from Goderville, from Normanville, and from Cany. All the relatives of the two families had been invited, reconciliations had taken place with estranged friends, letters had been sent to acquaintances of whom sight had long been lost. From time to time the crack of a whip was heard behind the hedge; soon the gate opened; it was a covered vehicle driving in.

Advancing at a gallop to the first step of the flight before the house, there it brought up sharply and discharged its passengers, who got out anywhere, rubbing their knees and stretching their arms. The ladies, bonneted, wore dresses of town cut, gold watch-chains, capes with their ends

crossed in the sash, or little colored neckerchiefs, fastened down with a pin at the back, so as to leave the neck bare behind. The boys, dressed in the same manner as their papas, seemed uneasy in their new coats (many even handselled that day the first pair of boots they had possessed in their lives), and you saw by their side, not speaking a word, in the white frock of her first communion, lengthened for the occasion, some big girl of fourteen or sixteen, their cousin or their elder sister, no doubt, ruddy-faced, confused, her hair greased with rose-scented pomade and very fearful of soiling her gloves. As there were not enough stablemen to unharness all the vehicles, the gentlemen turned up their sleeves and set to do it themselves. According to their different social positions, they wore dress-coats, frock-coats, round jackets, cut-away jackets; good dress-coats, surrounded by all the respectability of a family, and such as only came out of the wardrobe on great occasions; frock-coats with long skirts floating in the wind, cylindrical collar, pockets large as sacks; round jackets of coarse cloth, usually accompanying some cap with a rim of copper round its peak; cut-away jackets, very short, with two buttons close together at the back like a pair of eyes, and with tails that seemed to have been cut from a single log by the hatchet of the carpenter. Some even (but these very certainly would have to dine at the low end of the table) wore holiday-blouses —that is to say, blouses having the collar turned down on the shoulders, the back gathered in little

pleats, and the waist drawn in very low down by a girdle sewn in.

And their shirts bulged out over their chests like breastplates! Everybody had had his hair freshly cut, ears stuck out from heads. Each man had had a close shave; some, indeed, who had risen before dawn, not having been able to see to shave themselves properly, had diagonal scars under the nose, or, along the jaws, pieces of skin taken off as large as three-franc crowns, and the places inflamed by the open air during their journey, thus marbling a little with red patches all these heavy, good-humored faces. The office of the mayor being only half a league distant from the farm, the journey thither was made on foot, and back again, as soon as the ceremony was over at the church, in the same fashion.

The procession, at first keeping together like a single parti-colored scarf, moving serpent-fashion through the country as the narrow path wound between the fields of green wheat, soon opened its order and became severed into distinct groups, which lingered as they talked. The fiddler marched at the head with his fiddle adorned by rosettes of ribbon with streamers; the newly married pair came next, then the relatives, the friends in no particular order, and the children brought up the rear, amusing themselves by plucking the convolvulus flowers from the oat-blades, or by playing among themselves without being seen. Emma's dress, being too long, trailed a little; from time to time she stopped to draw it up, and then,

delicately, with her gloved fingers, she removed the bits of coarse grass with little thistle spikes, while Charles, empty-handed, stood waiting till she should have finished. *Père* Rouault, a new silk hat on his head and the cuffs of his black dress-coat coming over his hands to the nails, walked with Mme. Bovary *mère* on his arm. As for M. Bovary *père*, who, at bottom despising all the crew of them, had come wearing simply a frock-coat with one row of buttons, of military cut, he was retailing tavern gallantries to a fair young peasant girl. She bowed, blushed, knew not what to answer. The other guests were talking of their own business affairs, or nudging each other in the ribs by way of encouragement in advance to gaiety; and, if you listened, you could hear all the time the wretched fiddle of the musician, who continued to play as they walked through the fields. When he perceived that he had left the others behind, he stopped to take breath, rubbed his bow for a long time with resin, in order to make the strings grate better, and then began to walk on again, alternately lowering and raising the neck of his fiddle, so as to mark the time well for himself. The noise of the instrument put to flight the little birds while it was still in the distance.

The table was set out under the wagon-shed. On it were four sirloins, six fricassees of chicken, stewed veal, three legs of mutton, and, in the middle, a fine roast sucking-pig, flanked by four chitterlings cooked with sorrel. At the corners stood the brandy in decanters. The sweet cider

in bottles forced out its thick froth round the corks, and all the glasses had been filled to the brim with wine in advance. Large yellow creams, which floated about of themselves in the dish at the least shaking of the table, presented to the eye, designed on their smooth surface, the monograms of the newly married couple in such arabesques as never were seen before. A pastry cook had been imported from Yvetot for the tarts and almond cakes. As he was but commencing business in the district, he had taken great pains; and he brought in himself, at dessert, an artistically built-up confection which raised cries of wonder. At the base, to begin with, it had a square of blue cardboard, representing a temple with porticoes, colonnades, and statuettes of stucco, all round in niches constellated with stars in gilt paper; then, on the second story, stood a castle made of Savoy cake, surrounded by slender fortifications in angelica, almonds, dried grapes, quarters of oranges; and, finally, on the higher level, which was a green meadow, where there were rocks with lakes of sweetmeats and boats made of nut-shells, you beheld a little Cupid, balancing himself on a chocolate swing, the two uprights of which were terminated by two natural rosebuds, by way of balls, at the top.

Till evening the eating continued. When any one was too tired of sitting he went for a stroll in the yards or to play a game of *bouchon* in the barn; then he would return to the table. Some, toward the end, went to sleep there and snored. But, at

the coffee, everything brightened up again: one struck up a song, another performed feats of strength, they lifted weights, they ran under each other's arms, tried to raise carts on their shoulders, cracked broad jokes, kissed the ladies. In the evening, when the gathering broke up, the horses, gorged with oats to the nostrils, had difficulty in getting into the shafts; they kicked, reared, the harnesses broke, their masters swore or laughed, and all the night through, in the moonlight, along the roads of the district, there were runaway carriages going at a fast gallop, balancing into the dikes, springing over heaps of stones yards high, running into the banks, with women leaning out from the doors to seize the reins.

Those who remained at Les Bertaux passed the night drinking in the kitchen. The children had fallen asleep under the benches.

The bride had implored her father that she should be spared the customary pleasantries. A practical joker among their cousins, however (who had even brought a pair of boot soles for a wedding present), was about to blow water with his mouth through the key-hole when *père* Rouault arrived, just in time to prevent him, and explained that the dignity of his son-in-law's position did not permit such improprieties. The cousin, nevertheless, yielded unwillingly to these arguments. In his own mind he accused *père* Rouault of being proud, and went to join in a corner four or five others among the guests who, having received by chance several times in succession at table the

worse cuts of the joints, were also of opinion that they had been ill-entertained, whispering things to the detriment of their host, and in ambiguous words wishing his ruin.

Mme. Bovary *mère* had not opened her lips all day. She had been consulted neither upon the costume of her daughter-in-law, nor upon the arrangement of the festivities. She withdrew early. Her husband, instead of following her, sent for cigars from Saint-Victor, and smoked till morning, the while he drank *grogs au kirsch*, a mixture unknown to the company, and that was for him, as it were, the source of a yet greater esteem.

Charles was not of a facetious turn. He had not shone during the celebration of his wedding. He replied but tolerably to the witticisms, puns, remarks with double meanings, compliments and Gaulish jests which it was considered to be a duty to level at him from the soup onward.

The next day, on the other hand, he seemed another man. It was rather he who might have been taken for the virgin of the day before, while the bride allowed nothing to appear in her manner from which anything at all could be divined. The most waggish knew not what to say, and they looked at her when she passed near them with an unmeasured intensity of mental application. But Charles dissembled nothing. He called her "my wife," used "thou" in addressing her, consulted every one about her, looked for her everywhere, and often drew her away into the grounds where

he could be seen in the distance to pass his arm about her waist and continue walking half bent over her and ruffling the chemisette of her bodice with his head.

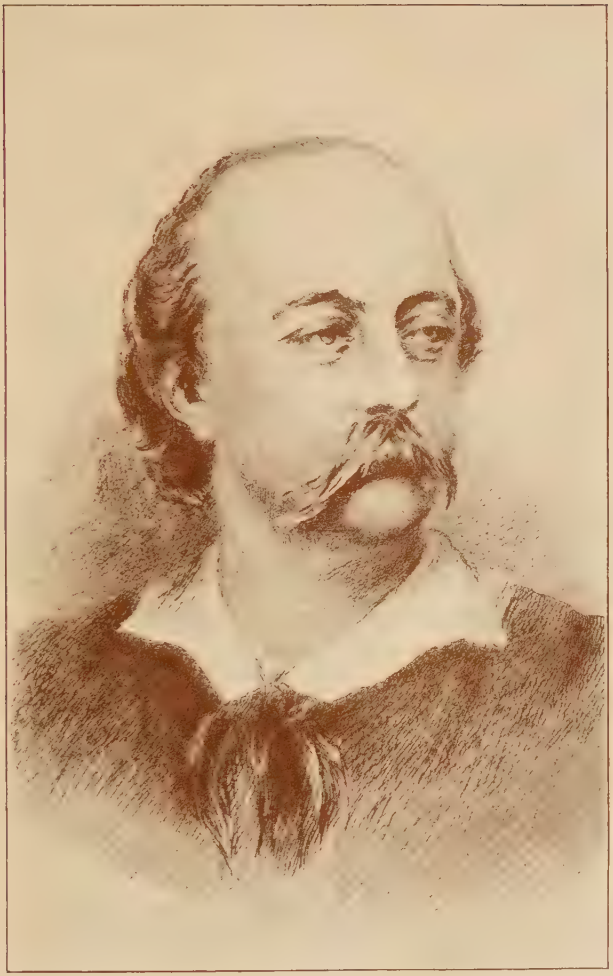
Two days after the wedding the newly married couple took their departure. Charles, on account of his patients, could not remain longer absent. *Père* Rouault directed that they should be driven home in his covered vehicle, and himself accompanied them as far as Vassonville. There he took leave of his daughter in a final embrace, got out and commenced his journey back on foot.

When he had taken about a hundred strides he stopped, and, as he watched the conveyance pass into the distance, with its wheels throwing up the dust, he heaved a deep sigh. Then he called to mind his own wedding, the old days, his wife's first pregnancy. He, also, had been very happy the day that he had led her from her father's house to his own, when he carried her on the crupper of his saddle as they trotted over the snow; for it was about Christmas time, and the country was all white. She had held him by one arm, having her basket slung on the other; the wind blew hither and thither the long pieces of lace employed in the dressing of her hair after the fashion of Caux. Sometimes they would fly across and touch his mouth, and when he turned his head he saw close to him, on his shoulder, her little rosy face, smiling silently beneath the golden badge on her bonnet. To warm her fingers she would thrust them from time to time into his bosom. How old and far

away it was, all that! Their son would have been thirty now! Then he looked behind him; he could see nothing on the road. He felt sad as a house stripped of its furniture; and, tender remembrances mingling with dark thoughts in his brain muddled by the fumes of the junketing, for a moment he was conscious of a lively desire to go take a stroll by the church. As he feared, however, that the sight of it might make him still sadder, he went straight back home. M. and Mme. Charles arrived at Tostes about six o'clock. The neighbors flocked to the windows to see their doctor's new wife.

The old housekeeper appeared, offered her greetings, apologized for the dinner not being ready, and invited Madame in the meantime to make herself acquainted with her house.

The brick front rose exactly from the line of the street, or road rather. Behind the door were hung a cloak with a little cape, a bridle, a black leather cap, and, in a corner, on the floor, there lay a pair of leggings still covered with dried mud. To the right was the parlor—that is to say, the apartment which served both as dining and sitting room. A canary-yellow wall-paper, relieved at its upper margin by a garland of pale flowers, trembled from floor to ceiling on the ill-stretched canvas beneath it; white calico curtains, bordered with a red stripe, overlapped each other down the length of the windows, and on the narrow mantel-piece there shone resplendent an ornamental clock in



GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

the form of a head of Hippocrates, between two plated silver candlesticks under glass shades of an oval form. On the other side of the passage was Charles's consulting-room, a small apartment measuring some six paces either way, with a table, three chairs, and an office arm-chair. The volumes of the *Dictionary of the Medical Sciences*, uncut, but with bindings that had suffered in all the successive sales through which they had passed, sufficed to fill almost alone the six shelves of a pine bookcase. During consultations the odor peculiar to red-haired persons would find its way through the wall, just as, too, you could hear in the kitchen the patients as they coughed in the consulting-room and related the story of their troubles. Next there came, opening immediately on the yard, where the stable was, a big dilapidated apartment, formerly a bakehouse, and which served now as wood-house, cellar, store-room, full of old iron, empty casks, worn-out garden tools, with a quantity of other dusty things of which it was impossible to guess the use.

The garden, longer than it was broad, extended, between two mortar-coated walls covered with trellised apricot trees, to a thorn-hedge which separated it from the fields. In the middle was a sun-dial, made of slate, on a pedestal of masonry; four flower-beds, stocked with ill-growing eglantine, surrounded symmetrically the more useful square plot of serious vegetables. Quite at the bottom, under the little fir trees, a priest moulded in plaster read his breviary.

Emma went upstairs to the bedrooms. The first was not furnished, but the second, which was the conjugal chamber, had a mahogany bedstead in an alcove with red draperies. A box covered with shells adorned the chest of drawers; and in a flagon on the writing-table, near the window, there was a bouquet of orange blossoms, tied round with white satin ribbons. It was a bridal bouquet, the bouquet of the other woman! She gazed at it. Charles, noticing it, took it and went to deposit it in the attic, while, sitting in an arm-chair (they were ranging her various belongings around her), Emma thought of her own bridal bouquet, which was packed in a bandbox, and wondered dreamily what its fate would be if by chance she should happen to die. She occupied herself during the first days in meditating changes in her house. She removed the glass shades from the candlesticks, had new wall-papers hung, the staircase repainted, seats made in the garden all round the sun-dial. She even inquired how it might be contrived for her to have a little pond with a jet of water and fish in it. And, finally, her husband, knowing that she liked driving, picked up, second-hand, a phaeton which, once it had been provided with new lamps and splash-boards of grain leather, almost resembled a tilbury.

So he was happy and without a care in the world. A meal taken alone with her, a walk in the evening along the high-road, a gesture of her hand passed over the fillets of her hair, the sight of her straw hat hanging on the fastener of a window,

and many other things besides, in which Charles had never suspected pleasure to lie, these made up now the continuance of his happiness. In bed of a morning, as they lay with heads side by side on the pillow, he would watch the sunlight as it quivered through the down of her fair cheeks, half covered by the scalloped flaps of her night-cap. Observed at such close quarters, her eyes seemed to him grown larger, especially when, as she awoke, she opened her eye-lids several times in succession; black in the shade and deep blue in a strong light, they possessed, as it were, layers of different colors that succeeded one another, and, from being duller deep down, grew brighter and brighter toward the surface of the enamel. His own eye would lose itself in those depths, and he saw there a reduced image of himself as far as the shoulders, with the silk kerchief he wore about his head and the half-opened upper part of his shirt. He rose. She used to go to the window to see him off, and remain with elbows resting on the sill, between two pots of geraniums, clad in her dressing-gown falling loosely about her. Charles, in the street, used to buckle on his spurs at the post; and she would continue to talk to him from above, breaking off with her lips and blowing toward him some sprig of flower or leaf which, after fluttering hither and thither, poising itself momentarily, describing half-circles in the air like a bird, ere it fell, would cling to the ill-combed mane of his old white mare standing motionless at the door. Charles, after mounting, used to throw her a kiss; she answered

always with some gesture, closed the window, and he rode off. And then along the highway that stretched out endlessly its long ribbon of dust, by the hollow lanes where the trees bent over and made arbors, through the paths where the corn came up to his knees, with the sun on his shoulders, and the air of the morning in his nostrils, his heart full of the joys of the night, mind tranquil, flesh satisfied, he went musing upon his happiness like men who, after dinner, lick their lips again at the remembered taste of the truffles they are digesting.

Till now what had he had in existence that was good? Was it his school days, when he was there shut up within those high walls, alone in the midst of his school-fellows richer than himself or more clever in their class-work, boys whom he made laugh by his accent, who made fun of his clothes, and whose mothers came to the visitors' room bringing pastry in their muffs? Was it later, when he was studying medicine and never had a purse well-lined enough to pay the price of a quadrille for any little work-girl who had become his mistress? After that he had lived for fourteen months with the widow, whose feet in bed were cold as pieces of ice. But now he was the possessor for life of this pretty woman, whom he adored. For him the universe extended not beyond the silken circuit of her petticoat; and he used to reproach himself for not loving her as she deserved, used to want to gaze upon her again, and he would make his way back quickly, and mount the staircase with beating heart. Emma, in her room,

would be dressing, and with silent steps he would approach and kiss her on the back, at which she would utter a cry.

He could not keep himself from continually touching her comb, her rings, her neckerchief; sometimes he gave her loud smacking kisses on the cheeks; at other times gentle little kisses in rows all the length of her bare arm, from the tips of her fingers to the shoulder; and she used to push him away, half smiling and bored, as one does a child who is for ever dangling after one.

Before her marriage she had believed herself to be in love; but the bliss that should have resulted from that love not having come, she must have been mistaken, was her reflection. And Emma sought to learn what precisely one was to understand in life by those words "felicity," "passion," "intoxication of delight," that had seemed to her so fine in books.

She had read "Paul and Virginia," and had dreamed of the little house made of bamboo, the negro Domingo, the dog Faithful, but above all of the sweet friendship of some kind little brother who goes to fetch you down red fruits that grow on tall trees higher than steeples, or runs with bare feet over the sand, bringing you a bird's nest.

When she was thirteen years old, her father had brought her himself to the town to place her in the convent school. They alighted at an inn of the St. Gervais quarter, where at supper they had

plates painted with designs portraying the history of Mlle de la Vallière. The explanatory legends around, interrupted here and there by the scratchings of knives, all glorified religion, a refined tenderness of heart, and the pomps of the Court.

Far from feeling dull at the convent at first, she liked the society of the good sisters, who, to amuse her, used to take her into the chapel, which was reached from the refectory by a long corridor. She played very little during the hours of recreation, understood well the catechism, and it was she who always replied to any difficult question put by the visiting priest. Living thus, without ever quitting the warm atmosphere of classrooms, and among these white-complexioned women, wearing their chaplets with cross of copper, she was lulled gently into apathy by the mystical languor that exhales from the perfumes of the altar, from the coolness of the fountain, from the radiance of candles. Instead of following the mass, she would examine in her book the pious, azure-bordered vignettes; and she loved the sick sheep, the holy heart pierced with sharp arrows, or the little Jesus who falls down after stumbling over his cross. By way of mortification she tried to remain a whole day without food. She tried to think of some vow to perform.

When she went to confession she used to invent little sins that she might stay there longer, on her knees, in the obscurity, her hands clasped, her face against the grating as she listened to the whispers of the priest. The metaphors of betrothed, hus-

band, heavenly lover, and eternal marriage, which are of constant occurrence in sermons, used to excite in the depths of her soul unlooked-for joys.

In the evening, before prayers, there was a reading from some religious work. During the week it was from some epitome of sacred history or the "Lectures" of Abbé Frayssinous, and on Sundays, by way of recreation, passages from the "Génie du Christianisme." How she listened, those first evenings, to the sonorous lamentation of romantic melancholies repeated in every echo of earth and of eternity! Had her childhood been passed in some back-shop of a business quarter, she would perhaps have opened then to those lyrical invasions of Nature which ordinarily only reach us through the translations of writers. But she knew the country too well; she was familiar with the bleating of flocks, dairy work, ploughs. Accustomed to the calm aspects of things, she turned, contrariwise, toward the tempestuous. She loved the sea but for its storms, and the green grass only when it came up sparsely amid ruins. She required to be able to extract from things a kind of profit personal to herself, and she rejected as useless everything which did not contribute to the immediate satisfaction of her heart, being of a temperament rather sentimental than artistic, seeking emotions and not landscapes.

There was at the convent an old dame who used to come every month for a week to repair the linen. Patronized by the Archbishop's household as belonging to an ancient family of gentlefolk ruined

during the Revolution, she ate in the refectory at the table of the good sisters, and, after meals, would usually have a bit of gossip with them before going upstairs again to her work. Often the boarders used to escape from the schoolroom to pay her a visit. She knew by heart gallant songs of the last century, which she would sing under her breath as she plied her needle. She had stories to narrate, told you any pieces of news there might be, did your errands in the town, and, secretly, to the older girls, would lend some novel which she always had in the pockets of her apron, and long chapters of which the excellent dame herself used to devour in the intervals of her work. In them there was question but of love, lovers, mistresses, persecuted ladies fainting in lonely pavilions, postillions whom you kill after each relay, horses ridden to death on every page, gloomy forests, troubles of the heart, oaths, sobs, tears and kisses, wherry-boats in the moonlight, nightingales in the woods, gentlemen brave as lions, mild as lambs, virtuous as you never knew one, always well-dressed and ready to weep like urns.

Thus, during six months of her sixteenth year, Emma soiled her hands with this refuse of old reading-rooms. In the company of Walter Scott, later, she became enamored of things historical, dreamed of great oak chests, guard-rooms, and minstrels. She would have liked to live in some old manor-house, even as those dames, who, in their long bodices, beneath the trefoils of pointed arches, passed their days with elbow on the stone,

and chin resting on hand, watching as he drew nigh from out the remote distance of the country landscape, a cavalier with white plume galloping on a black horse. She had at that same epoch the cult of Mary Stuart, and enthusiastic venerations for illustrious or ill-fortuned women. Joan of Arc, Héloïse, Agnes Sorel, la belle Ferronnière, and Clémence Isaure, for her, were distinguished like comets on the obscure immensity of history, in which again stood out here and there, but plunged deeper in the gloom and without any connection among themselves, Saint Louis with his oak, Bayard dying, certain ferocities of Louis XI, a dim memory of the St. Bartholomew, the plume of the Béarnais, and ever the recollection of painted plates extolling Louis XIV.

At the music-class, in the songs that she used to sing, there was only question of little angels with wings of gold, of madonnas, of lagoons, of gondoliers, harmless compositions which let her half perceive, beyond the foolishness of the style and the defects of the melody, the alluring phantasmagoria of sentimental realities. Some of her comrades used to bring to the convent the keepsakes which they had received as presents at the New Year. They had to be hidden; it was quite a business; they were read in the dormitory.

Handling delicately their handsome satin bindings, Emma used to fix her dazzled eyes on the names of the unknown authors, generally counts or viscounts, who had signed their names below their compositions.

She would quiver with excitement as she blew beneath the soft tissue paper covering the engravings, which rose half-folded and fell back gently on the page. 'Twould be, behind the balustrade of a balcony, a young man in a short cloak pressing in his arms a white-robed girl carrying an alms-purse at her waist; or, it might be, the anonymous portraits of those English ladies with long fair curls who, from under their round straw hats, look at you with their great limpid eyes. Some of them were represented lolling in carriages, gliding through the midst of parks, where a greyhound gambolled in advance of the equipage driven at a trot by two little postillions in white breeches. Others, losing themselves in reverie on sofas near an opened letter, were contemplating the moon through the partly open window, half draped with a black curtain. The ingenuous ones, with tear on cheek, billed and cooed to a turtle-dove through the bars of a Gothic cage, or, smiling, with head bent toward one shoulder, stripped the petals from a marguerite with their pointed fingers, bent back like the toes of shoes carved on the model of a ship's figure-head. And you also were there, sultans with your long pipes, reclining in ecstasy beneath green arbors in the arms of dancing girls, giaours, Turkish swords, Greek head-gear; and you, above all, wan landscapes of dithyrambic countries, that show us often at the same time palm-trees, pines, tigers on the right, a lion to the left, Tartar minarets on the horizon, in the foreground Roman ruins, and next to them,

squatting camels, the whole encircled by a virgin forest scrupulously cleaned and with a great perpendicular sunbeam trembling in the water, where there stand out at intervals like white excoriations on a ground of steely gray, swans that are swimming about.

And the shade of the lamp fixed to the wall above Emma's head threw down the light on all these pictures of the world which passed before her one after the other in the silence of the dormitory, and to the distant sound of some late cab that wandered still on the boulevards.

When her mother died at first she wept much. She caused a funeral picture to be made for herself with the hair of the dead woman, and, in a letter which she sent to Les Bertaux, abounding in sad reflections on life, she begged that later she might be buried in the same tomb. The good man thought she must be ill, and came to see her. Emma was satisfied within herself to feel that she had attained from the very first that rare ideal of pale existences to which mediocre hearts never penetrate. She allowed herself, therefore, to slip into Lamartinian meanderings, listened to the harps on the lakes, all the songs of dying swans, all the falling of leaves, the pure virgins who go up to heaven, and the voice of the Eternal discoursing in the valleys. She grew bored by it, was unwilling to recognize the fact, continued through habit, then through vanity, and was surprised one day to feel herself calmed and with no more sadness in her heart than she had wrinkles on her brow.

The good nuns, who had felt so sure about her vocation, perceived with great astonishment that Mlle. Rouault seemed to be escaping from their fold. They had, indeed, lavished upon her to such an extent services, retreats, *neuvaines*, and sermons, preached so constantly the respect due to the saints and martyrs, and given so much good advice for the modest governance of the body and the salvation of her soul, that she did as horses do when they are dragged by the bridle—she stopped short suddenly, and the bit dropped from her mouth. That spirit of hers, positive in the midst of its enthusiasms, which had loved the church for its flowers, music for the words of the songs, and literature for its passional excitation, was ready to revolt in presence of the mysteries of the faith, just as she became gradually more irritated by the discipline, which was something antipathetic to her constitution. When her father took her away from school, her departure caused no sorrow. The superior was even of opinion that latterly she had grown hardly respectful toward the community.

Emma, once more at home, was pleased at first by her power to order the servants about, then was seized by a disgust of the country and regretted her convent. When Charles visited Les Bertaux for the first time, she had come to consider herself an extremely disillusioned person, with nothing more to learn, and destined never to feel anything again.

But the anxiety of a new position, or perhaps

the stimulated nervous activity caused by the man's presence, had sufficed to persuade her that she possessed at last that marvellous passion which till then had remained, like a great bird with rosy plumage, high hovering, in the splendor of poetic heavens, and she could not believe now that this calm wherein she lived was the happiness that she had dreamed.

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT.

DECEMBER 13

A BOY WHO WENT WHALING*

HE WANTED adventure and, by the gods, he got it. He went in an old whaler down to the stormy waters of the Horn. From a stove boat, he jumped literally out of a whale's mouth. He hunted for treasure buried by pirates on an island whither, to this very day, men resort on the same errand. He escaped with his life from a band of armed men who nearly trapped him, when, as a runaway sailor, he lay concealed in a hut high in the Peruvian Andes. He saw the death of the great lone whale of Paita. By an odd turn of his whaling voyage, he became, first, a clerk at a South American port, then a consul; and when he resigned his office and embarked for home, he carried with him a fortune in gold.

This boy whaleman, Leonard Gibbs Sanford by name, was no mere vagabond adventurer. His father owned thousands of acres of timberland in up-state New York, and served his district in the House of Representatives. His mother was the youngest of the seven daughters of Dr. Leonard Gibbs of Granville. It is easy to understand why there was a family upheaval when the Sanfords discovered that sixteen-year-old Len was running

*From "Whaling," by permission.

away to sea—in what established household would there not have been? But in meeting the situation raised by the exploit of their lively son, the father and mother manifested uncommonly sound judgment.

If he was determined to go to sea, they reasoned, why, let him go, but in good standing and in a good ship. So they gave him a chest and an honest outfit, which no young sailor ever got from the soulless landsharks of our ports, and arranged that he should sail on a whaling voyage to the Pacific Ocean in the ship *Lancer*, of New Bedford, whose captain, Aaron C. Cushman, was an old friend of George Sanford, the father.

There was no railroad then, along the waterfront of New Bedford. Big jiggers, loaded with oil casks, ploughed through the black dust and mud between the town and the whaling vessels that lay in every stage of decay and repair at the wharves. Some of the vessels were dismasted hulks which had served their time the world over; others were stout new barques and ships, ready to sail on maiden voyages to the antipodes. In the lofts old seamen with palms of leather and with stout needles talked of selvages and gores. In the shops and streets, hammers rang and metal clanked and drays rumbled, and men of every race and color shouted and called.

They hove the *Lancer* down, and cleaned her, and patched her and coppered her anew. They bent on sails, and rove halyards and sheets and tacks. They brought on board staves and hoops

and cedar boards. They swayed new boats up to the cranes, and stowed down new craft in the forehold. Then Captain Aaron Cushman, in his good shore clothes, inspected all that was going on, and the ship swung out into the stream and lay until morning, when, with the captain and his wife on board, the crew mustered, and all sail set, she put to sea.

Len Sanford was a light-haired, stocky boy, headstrong and combative, but square, honest, quick to take the part of an under dog, eager and adventurous. Once he had climbed the bare trunk of a dead pine to an eagle's nest, which spread horizontally to all sides above him. To scale the edge of the nest, he had gone out from the tree, hand over hand, with only the rough branches of the nest to hold him up, and with only the empty air between him and the distant rocks. By nature, such boys scorned the lubber's hole, but were quick to resent injustice; they made magnificent sailors, but flared up at the exactions of an ill-tempered officer.

Len Sanford had signed the articles for four years; but in three years, nine months, and twenty-nine days, the *Lancer* came home without him.

With her lookouts nodding at the masthead and her officers pounding the lore of ships and the fear of God into the green hands, the old whaler crossed the Atlantic on the first leg of her long voyage. Young Sanford learned to pick out by instinct each tack and sheet and brace, on the darkest

nights. He learned to ride a topgallant yardarm with the ship swinging under him like a pendulum. In such boat-drills as no 'varsity crew has ever dreamed of, he swung a long ash oar under the cold eye and profane tongue of a bucko mate, until he could pull with the best of them, as they drove the light boat through tumbling seas for hours on end.

They were a month and five days out when they first sighted sperm whales and lowered for them. Their ill fortune is tersely recorded in the log book, thus: "At 7 A.M. saw S whales at 8 lowered 4 boats went alongside a large whale and missed him. Larboard boat John Baptiste."

Poor John Baptiste! After seventy years the record of his failure still stands on the pages of the log book for all to read who will. He committed the unforgivable blunder of missing a large whale.

Taking a blackfish three days later did not go far to console them; but on the sixth day after that, the starboard boat, headed by Chief Mate Owen Fisher, struck a whale and saved it. In the log book of the *Lancer*, the picture of a black whale with a blood-red spout, drawn with firm hand and liberally inked, and stretching from one side of the page to the other, expresses the general exultation.

That night the wind blew a gale, and the next morning a heavy sea was running when they began to cut in. Although the sea added immensely to the risks and labor of the officers and men on the outswung staging, as, with their spades, they shaped the great blanket pieces of blubber,

at nine o'clock that evening they finished the body and lay by the head. But at eleven o'clock word that the seas had parted the head chains brought all hands on deck. They worked all night to save the case; at daylight they began to bail spermaceti; by noon the next day they finished bailing and cutting; and let the worthless shell of the great head go down.

When the work of boiling was fairly under way, the mincing machine broke; but with knives they continued the mincing, slicing the blubber into thin leaves, like bacon cut and left on the rind, and the boiling went on apace.

As they boiled, the thick black smoke permeated every garment and compartment, and the fetid smell crept into forecastle and cabin. The fires flamed up, and the men, stripped to the waist, leaped like devils in attendance on the bubbling trypots. Smith, carpenter, and cooper worked at anvil and bench; the grindstone whined incessantly against steel spades and knives and the blunted edges of used irons. So rugged was the weather, when the *Lancer* was boiling her first whale, that the rolling deck ran with oil and water.

Then they cooled the oil and coopered it and stowed it down, cleaned away the grease, holystoned the deck, and cruised along south toward the Azores, whaling as they went.

In their idle hours, which were many when no whales were seen, they made jagging wheels and ivory combs and model vessels; and on the polished teeth of sperm whales they engraved with marvel-

ous skill pictures of whaling vessels and men-of-war and island women.

As the men worked, the yellow-haired boy watched them and listened to their yarns, or tinkered at a whale's tooth. Strange stories were told, and many of them were true. Adventure has little more to offer those who have struck a forty-barrel bull and have ridden tempestuous leagues at the end of a taut line, with smoke streaming from the loggerhead, until a lance struck to the "life," and clotted blood showered the boats and stained the sea.

He sat ready by his oar when they swept down, under sail, on feeding pods. He did a man's work when, in calm weather, with paddles, lest the sound of oars startle the wary creatures, they snaked up on solitary whales, and with keel to black skin, struck the irons to the hitches, then towed their catch back to the becalmed ship, and cut it in while the sharks bit out great chunks of blubber, stealing a quart of oil at every bite, and the vessel heeled under the strain of the great tackles, and the decks were as slippery as the places where the wicked stand. It was a hard life, but it made a man of him.

Of all the incidents of that adventurous voyage the grimmest and the one most sobering to the boy whaleman, happened three months out. They had touched at Flores and at Fayal, where they had landed seventy-six barrels of oil by lighter. Thence they had taken a new departure and had stood southwest. Lowering several times for

blackfish, "coopering" oil, sheathing the decks, and one day sending a boat on board a passing French ship, they had made good progress on the second leg of the long voyage. But on November 22d, Captain Cushman died, after an illness of a few hours.

Consider the appalling suddenness with which death came among them in mid-ocean. They were prepared for death in the heat of action, but not for such a death as this. During four days they steered toward Pernambuco, with all sail set. On the fifth day they raised land; and on the sixth they made Pernambuco harbor and sent a boat on shore with Mrs. Cushman; but the port authorities clapped the captain's widow and the crew of the boat into quarantine, and refused permission to land Aaron Cushman's body.

For seven days the *Lancer* lay off and on at Pernambuco, with the captain's body on board in a pipe that the cooper had set up for it.

On the seventh day, the boat's crew came out to the ship for "Mrs. Cushman's duds"—I take the phrase from the log book—which they fetched ashore. On the second day thereafter, December 6th, the *Lancer* took on board fresh water, and on December 8th, still standing off and on with her dead master, she spoke the brig *Thomas Walker* of Philadelphia, bound to her home port, whose captain agreed to take Aaron Cushman's body to North America.

It was a sad experience for all who were in any personal way associated with the captain; and in

more ways than one it affected the fortunes of young Len Sanford. Chief Mate Owen Fisher became master; and perhaps it was because Captain Cushman had kept an eye to young Sanford's welfare that Captain Owen Fisher hazed him until life in the *Lancer* became a torment. For a while the boy had a rough time of it but his misfortunes served him better than he knew.

Down in the South Atlantic, six or seven hundred miles north-northeast of the Horn, two boats from the *Lancer* got fast to a whale that made history. The first warning the oarsmen had was the wild yell of the boat-steerer, "Jump! Jump! Jump for your lives!"

Dropping his oar, Len turned in the larboard boat and saw that the whale lay on its side and that the long lower jaw was closing on boat and crew. He saw the black head, the white mouth, and the small eye of the beast; then, jumping actually out of its mouth, he dived into the sea as the jaws snapped together.

The boat was stove to splinters, and Len Sanford was knocked unconscious, but the waist boat picked him up with the others, and though the boat-header was forced to cut loose to save their lives, they later found the whale and got him alongside. It was so rugged that they broke a blubber-hook cutting in, and it took them six days to finish trying out the blubber.

They cruised along the western coast of South America and on the off-shore grounds—while standing his tricks at the wheel, Len committed

to memory Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome"; in more ways than one he was an odd stick of a whaleman—and in March they touched at Cocos Island, which lies some three hundred miles off Panama, in the old track of the galleons that carried treasure on the way from Peru to Spain.

There was scurvy in the crew, for months had passed without shore leave, and they hastened to give some of the men the "earth cure" by burying them for a time up to their necks, on the principle that fresh soil draws like a poultice. It is reported that the treatment was efficacious.

During the three days they spent there, young Sanford roamed over the island from end to end. He tried to scale a mountain peak, but was unable to penetrate the thick undergrowth. He found beautiful birds, a few snails, and some pigs, and like many another boy who went whaling long ago, he industriously dug for the buried treasure of the pirate brig *Relampago*.

The treasure of Cocos Island is famous in stories of the sea. For more than three years Bolivar, waging against Spain his war for independence, besieged the castle of Callao, at the port of Lima, which held out longer than any other port on the Pacific. Finally, when the defending force had become an army of walking skeletons, the wealthy Spaniards of the town assembled their gold and plate and precious stones, and set sail in the *Relampago* for Spain; but the crew, learning that treasure was on board, walked the passengers over

the plank in the most approved piratical fashion, and laid a course for Cocos Island, to divide their plunder.

There they quarrelled murderously among themselves; and the survivors buried the treasure, burned the brig, and sailed for the mainland in small boats.

Some the authorities caught and executed. Others escaped and scattered the world over. Periodically, for half a century thereafter, members of the crew, real or pretended, kept turning up with projects for recovering the treasure.

Dying men have confessed in their last moments that they had a part in the robbery, and have told where to find the gold. Ancient seamen have produced old charts to show the hiding place. Within a month of the day these words are written, an aged man has arrived in Boston from a Caribbean port, who says he is the only survivor of those who have had the key that makes it possible to find the treasure. He tells of helping to remove the gold and jewels from Cocos Island, where they were first hidden, to an uncharted island, where they have since remained; and he is trying to organize an expedition to go back and recover them.

It gives one a strange feeling of being actually in touch with old whaling days, to come upon this paragraph in the shipping news of 1922; but although different records place the value of the treasure at from $5,000,000 to $6,000,000 and although the story was well known in Len Sanford's

day, the island is so rough that it would take a regiment of men and many years of hard work to search it thoroughly. Wherefore so far as we know, the gold and jewels remain on one island or another, to tantalize new generations of young adventurers. The tale is one of the great true stories of buried treasure.

By the time the *Lancer* visited Cocos Island there was trouble in the ship, and even the log book records the low rumble of gathering mutiny. In May, 1857, eight men, headed by the luckless boat-steerer, John Baptiste, refused duty. Len Sanford was not of the eight, but he was leading a dog's life on board, and, like so many young fellows in those old, hard days, he resolved to take his fortunes in his own hands and strike out for himself.

The *Lancer* next touched at Paita, and there, on the tenth day in port, ten months and two days after sailing from New Bedford, Len ran away.

Some shipmates, when he was on shore leave, smuggled his chest out of the ship. With the help of natives, they concealed him and his belongings in a hut high on the side of a hill, and left him.

Late that night, as he lay in the hut, he heard steps outside. It was a wild, lonesome place, and no good was to be expected of untimely visitors. The conviction surged upon him that someone, who knew of his presence there, was bent on killing and robbing him as he slept. At all events, the

alternative, that they were going to arrest him and take him back to the ship for the customary reward of five or ten dollars, was bad enough.

The sound of steps came nearer. While he listened, he got on his feet and stood a-tiptoe by the door. The strangers paused just outside and whispered together.

As they entered, young Sanford ran into the area behind the hut. A tall fence of palms inclosed the area; but he scrambled over the fence with fingers and toes as the men burst out after him. They leaped up and clutched at his feet, but he tumbled down on the outside and ran.

In the middle of the long road down the hill he saw by the bright moon a man left on guard. He ran straight at the fellow, leaped into him feet first, knocked him sprawling, and left him there in the moonlight.

The next morning Len went to the consul for help. He got it, too, which is more, for the consul hid him until the ship sailed. It was never the custom of consuls to harbor runaway sailors; they were far more likely to pursue such fugitives and deliver them into the hands of irate skippers, who took unholy pleasure in drawing on a man's wages, in accordance with the articles, to pay the officers; so there is a pleasing mystery about this incident in the story, and a mystery it must remain, for I know of no one living who can explain it.

Len Sanford never recovered his chest or his outfit, but in 1857, under Consul William Miles,

he became secretary of our consulate at Callao; and in 1858, under Consul Fayette M. Ringgold, he became secretary of the consulate at Paita.

Off Paita ranged "Paita Tom," one of the famous "lone whales," as those morose, solitary bulls were called that lived alone like rogue elephants, and fought against all comers. During his stay at Paita, young Sanford saw the death of old Tom, who was recognized by a notched, ragged spout and an uncommonly large hump and had established in whaling circles a world-wide reputation as a dangerous old bull.

At four bells in the afternoon watch, a whaleship was standing in for Paita, when the familiar cry, "Thar blo-o-o-ows! Blo-o-o-o-o-o-ows!" brought all hands on deck. A large whale lay in plain sight, perhaps a mile away, and two points off the lee bow.

Instead of giving the usual order, "Haul back the main yard! Hoist and swing!" the captain, closing his glass, said to the mate, "No use to lower, Mr. Malloy. That's Paita Tom. I know the old devil. He smashed two boats and killed a good man for me last voyage. He's sent more men out of Cape Cod to Davy Jones than there's barrels of oil under his black skin. No, no, you precious rascal, you don't juggle a boat down this time. Keep your course and we will ours. Steer small, Mr. Malloy, and leave that chap astern."

It was the mate's first voyage in the Pacific, and although he was a quiet, surly fellow, he was a good seaman and afraid of no whale that ever

spouted. Those who watched him could see that the captain's order had keenly disappointed him; but the men were glad enough to let Tom go.

The vessel stood into the harbor, and the captain, leaving her to lie off and on in charge of the mate until the next day, went ashore to ship new hands and get the mail.

The mate held her all night on a course that, in his judgment, would bring her well to windward of the harbor by dawn, but unsuspected currents carried her so far to leeward that, for several hours after he discovered his position, he had to beat up against a strong land breeze, which swept down from the Cordilleras. He hoped thus to take advantage of the sea breeze that sprang up every afternoon, and so enter the bay, take the captain on board, and be off to the whaling grounds; but by the middle of the morning the wind went down and left the ship virtually becalmed, five or six miles off the promontory of Paita.

At eight bells—the very moment when the cook was bringing forward the kids—there came simultaneously from the lookouts at fore, main, and mizzen, the wailing cry, "Thar blo-o-o-o-ows! Blo-o-o-o-o-ows! Thar again! Blo-o-o-o-o-ows! Blo-o-o-o-o-ows!"

The great black back of a sperm whale rose into plain sight a mile off the lee beam.

The men crowded rail and rigging and watched the whale, which lay in the slow, oily seas, "methodically puffing out his vapory jet, as leisurely as the smoke from the pipe of some fat, dozing

Dutchman." Each spout, instead of being a low, even puff of white vapor, was notched and ragged. For the second time they had sighted Paita Tom.

It is hard for us to realize all that the sight of that infamous old cetacean meant to a whaler's crew. It was very much as if the Old Boy, wearing horns, tail, and hooves, were to rise up, with the smell of brimstone and sulphur, before the congregation of an Afro-American "Old-Ironsides-Baptist" church.

As they watched him, he turned up his mighty flukes and sounded. For an hour longer the ship lay becalmed; then, a mile away, the whale rose again.

"All hands lay aft!"

It was the mate who spoke. His sharp voice startled them. As they gathered in the waist, he watched their faces closely.

"You all know when the captain is ashore I command the ship and answer for what is done aboard. We are out here for 'ile,' and want to fill up and make a straight wake for Buzzard's Bay with a full hold. Not a horse-piece has come over the gangway for six weeks, and I, for one, am tired of such soperin' luck. That old bull off the beam there will stow down one hundred barrels easy; and with a good boat's crew to back me, I believe we'll have him alongside in two hours. Now, if there are enough good men among you, game to man my boat and lay me on that hump, then stand out here and let me see your cutwaters. I won't come back without a dead

whale or a stove boat. I don't want a hand but what will jump at the chance to go with me. I never was gallied by a whale yet, and won't be by this, if you'll pull me on to that fellow. There's five thousand dollars laying out there under that chap's black skin. I only want enough of you to man my boat, and we won't come back without blubber. Every man who goes must volunteer. I won't urge any of you. Now, then, those of you who'll get me on that whale can lay over to windward, and the rest of you stay where you are."

For a moment no one spoke. The cooper, who had been in a boat stove by Paita Tom, stepped forward, but thought better of his impulse, and stepped back again. It was a young fellow from Martha's Vineyard who cried, "Here goes for luck!" and walked across the deck. A Kanaka boat-steerer followed him; then another man, and another, and another, until not one was left at the lee rail.

"Well," said Mr. Malloy, "I'm sorry you can't all go."

He chose four men and his own boat-steerer, spoke a moment with the second mate, and ordered the crew to break out an empty ten-barrel cask.

From the mate's boat they removed, at his direction, all whaling gear and craft except the oars and a single lance. The lance he chose for himself, with special care. Ordering them to lower the boat, which the absence of the usual equipment made especially light and buoyant, he spoke

again to the second mate, and went down the side with his picked men The cask, which now lay in the water beside the ship, they succeeded in taking into the boat and balancing across the bow; then they pulled out of earshot of the ship, and while the men rested on their oars, the mate briefly addressed them.

Again they began to row slowly toward the whale. The sky was clear from horizon to horizon, and those on board the ship could see every flash of the oars and every motion of the men. The third mate, ordering his boat lowered, waited beside the vessel for whatever should happen.

The whale reared his colossal head from the sea, perpendicularly, like a titanic column, and slowly turned and gazed about with his small, unblinking eyes. The act was deliberate, almost malicious. Crashing down on the water, he charged over the surface, leaving a wake like an ocean liner, straight upon the little boat in which were Malloy and his men.

As the whale's head had risen, Malloy had changed places with the boat-steerer. When the whale charged, piling up before his blunt brow a white wall of foam, Malloy pushed the cask overboard and thundered, "Starn all!"

The men drove the light boat back, and the cask floated quietly in the path of the angry bull. Checking their headway, the crew rested, each man with his hands on the loom of his oar, and waited for orders.

Veering from a straight line, the whale turned

until his small eye perceived the floating cask; then he dashed at it. It rebounded unharmed from his broad head. Again he rushed upon it, and again. Turning, he snapped at it with his long lower jaw, but his teeth slipped off the rolling staves. He turned again in growing fury, as he worried the elusive thing.

Malloy stood in the bow of the whaleboat, lance in hand. He waved to the oarsmen, and the boat shot forward and slightly to the right. As she flashed along the side of the preoccupied whale, Malloy, with all the strength of arms and body, drove the lance to the socket, straight into the spot just behind the fin that covers the "life."

The whale turned convulsively toward the boat, but the boat had already shot ahead, free and clear. With thrashing flukes and jaw, he flung himself out of water and fell from mid-air on the cask, which bobbed out, unharmed, from under him. Suddenly his clear spout flamed crimson.

The men roared in triumph.

The crimson flood darkened and thickened. The whale half-breached, and threw himself round. He struck his flukes on the sea, with reports as of cannon. He dashed first one way, then another, filling the air with foam and clots of blood; he went into blind, futile paroxysms of rage, now growing weaker, now rushing about in desperate spasms.

In just twenty minutes he rolled fin out, and lay still.

That afternoon the usual breeze came up and

the ship sailed into port; the boats tallied on to the whale and towed him to the anchor ground.

They cut in old Tom and boiled him down, and, to their surprise, got only seventy-five barrels of oil instead of the hundred they expected, which fact the bull's life of constant fighting perhaps explains. They found in the blubber twenty or more twisted and corroded harpoons. One of them, which had cut through the orifice of the spiracle, had caused the peculiar form of Tom's spouts.

To the amazement of the whalemen, the inhabitants of Paita were enraged that their whale was taken, and put out in makeshift boats to shake their fists and spit angry oaths at the vessel. Old Tom had come, in their minds, to be a sort of guardian of the port, and they attributed to him their good fortune in having no sharks in Paita Bay. But nevertheless they swarmed by hundreds down from the dusty streets and lined the shore to see the whale cut in, for even though they considered him as in a manner their tutelary angel, the process of disposing of his blubber were strange and very interesting.

It is said that George Sanford, Len's father, who was an old friend of General Scott, persuaded the general to break the habit of a lifetime and use his influence to push the boy ahead. At all events, on September 3, 1858, President Buchanan appointed Len United States consul for the port of Tumbez, Peru, and the Senate confirmed the appointment.

Len was then only nineteen years old, and to hold the appointment, the law required him to be twenty-one. He kept his true age a carefully guarded secret.

He had deserted from the *Lancer* on June 6, 1857. On September 6, 1859, exactly two years and three months later, as "consul of the United States of America for Tumbez and the dependencies thereof," he signed, at the request of Captain Owen Fisher, a certificate that Captain Fisher had discharged from the *Lancer* John Duty, a sick sailor, and had paid him three months' extra wages. There is humor in the thought of that meeting between the captain and his quondam runaway.

During his years in South America, Len learned Spanish and various Indian dialects, and traded on his own account in india rubber and Peruvian bark and fresh vegetables; and in search for the supplies that he sold to visiting whaleships, he rode far and wide throughout the country and high into the mountains.

There are few records of his life during those years in South America; but the little that is known indicates that he had his full share, and more, of adventure. He met the Indians in their own huts and villages. He traded with native farmers in the valleys. Once, when he was riding on a lonely trail in the Andes, a puma leaped from a tree and killed his horse under him.

It was a stirring life, but letters entreating him to return home kept coming, and he himself was

eager to visit his family. He resigned his office on March 31, 1862, and set out on the long journey north, with $10,000 dollars in gold, earned by shrewd, honest enterprise. For years he had worked to prove that he was no ne'er-do-weel. He was still a very young man, remember, and for a lad of his age it was in those days a small fortune that he was bringing home to justify himself in his father's eyes. He was very eager to see his father again; but when he came to the Isthmus of Panama, he found waiting for him the letter that told him that his father was dead.

He returned to his native state, and there spent the active years of a notable life. But to his last days, he retained his keen, youthful interest in the lands and seas whither he had gone as a boy whaler; and as long as he lived, he remembered every word of Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome," which he had committed to memory during the tropical nights, when he was standing his trick at the wheel of the old whaleship *Lancer*.

CHARLES BOARDMAN HAWES.

DECEMBER 14

ON WENLOCK EDGE

ON WENLOCK EDGE the wood's in trouble;
His forest fleece the Wrekin heaves;
The gale, it plies the saplings double,
And thick on Severn snow the leaves

'Twould blow like this through holt and hanger
When Uricon the city stood:
'Tis the old wind in the old anger,
But then it threshed another wood.

Then, 'twas before my time, the Roman
At yonder heaving hill would stare:
The blood that warms an English yeoman,
The thoughts that hurt him, they were there.

There, like the wind through woods in riot,
Through him the gale of life blew high;
The tree of man was never quiet;
Then 'twas the Roman, now 'tis I.

The gale, it plies the saplings double,
It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone:
To-day the Roman and his trouble
Are ashes under Uricon.

A. E. HOUSMAN.

FROM FAR, FROM EVE AND MORNING

FROM far, from eve and morning
And yon twelve-winded sky,
The stuff of life to knit me
Blew hither: here am I.

Now—for a breath I tarry
Nor yet disperse apart—
Take my hand quick and tell me,
What have you in your heart.

Speak now, and I will answer;
How shall I help you, say;
Ere to the wind's twelve quarters
I take my endless way.

A. E. HOUSMAN.

AS THROUGH THE WILD GREEN HILLS OF WYRE

AS THROUGH the wild green hills of Wyre,
The train ran, changing sky and shire,
And far behind, a fading crest,
Low in the forsaken west
Sank the high-reared head of Clee,
My hand lay empty on my knee.
Aching on my knee it lay:
That morning half a shire away
So many an honest fellow's fist
Had well-nigh wrung it from the wrist.
Hand, said I, since now we part
From fields and men we know by heart,

From strangers' faces, strangers' lands,—
Hand, you have held true fellows' hands.
Be clean then; rot before you do
A thing they'd not believe of you.
You and I must keep from shame
In London streets the Shropshire name;
On banks of Thames they must not say
Severn breeds worse men than they;
And friends abroad must bear in mind
Friends at home they leave behind
Oh, I shall be stiff and cold
When I forget you, hearts of gold;
The land where I shall mind you not
Is the land where all's forgot.
And if my foot returns no more
To Teme nor Corve nor Severn shore,
Luck, my lads, be with you still
By falling stream and standing hill,
By chiming tower and whispering tree,
Men that made a man of me.
About your work in town and farm
Still you'll keep my head from harm,
Still you'll help me, hands that gave
A grasp to friend me to the grave.

A. E. HOUSMAN.

INTO MY HEART AN AIR THAT KILLS

INTO my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.

A. E. HOUSMAN.

A POT OF HONEY*

ON MY breakfast table there is a pot of honey. Not the manufactured stuff sold under that name in shops, but honey of the hive, brought to me by a neighboring cottager whose bees often hum in my garden. It gives, I confess, more pleasure to my eye than to my palate; but I like to taste of it, because it is honey.

There is as much difference, said Johnson, between a lettered and an unlettered man as between the living and the dead; and, in a way, it was no extravagance. Think merely how one's view of common things is affected by literary association. What were honey to me if I knew nothing of Hymettus and Hybla?—if my mind had no stores of poetry, no memories of romance? Suppose me town-pent, the name might bring with it some pleasantness of rustic odor; but of what poor significance even that, if the country were to me mere grass and corn and vegetables, as to the man who has never read nor wished to read. For the Poet is indeed a Maker: above the world of sense, trodden by hidebound humanity, he builds that

*From "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft," by permission of Thomas Bird Mosher, publisher.

world of his own whereto is summoned the unfettered spirit. Why does it delight me to see the bat flitting at dusk before my window, or to hear the hoot of the owl when all the ways are dark? I might regard the bat with disgust, and the owl either with vague superstition or not heed it at all. But these have their place in the poet's world, and carry me above this idle present.

I once passed a night in a little market-town where I had arrived tired and went to bed early. I slept forthwith, but was presently awakened by I knew not what; in the darkness there sounded a sort of music, and, as my brain cleared, I was aware of the soft chiming of church bells. Why, what hour could it be? I struck a light and looked at my watch. Midnight. Then a glow came over me. "We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow!" Never till then had *I* heard them. And the town in which I slept was Evesham, but a few miles from Stratford-on-Avon. What if those midnight bells had been to me but as any other, and I had reviled them for breaking my sleep?—Johnson did not much exaggerate.

GEORGE GISSING.

MUSIC

OF LATE, I have been wishing for music. An odd chance gratified my desire.

I had to go into Exeter yesterday. I got there about sunset, transacted my business, and turned to walk home again through the warm twilight.

In Southernhay, as I was passing a house of which the ground-floor windows stood open, there sounded the notes of a piano—chords touched by a skilful hand. I checked my step, hoping, and in a minute or two the musician began to play that nocturne of Chopin which I love best—I don't know how to name it. My heart leapt. There I stood in the thickening dusk, the glorious sounds floating about me; and I trembled with very ecstasy of enjoyment. When silence came, I waited in the hope of another piece, but nothing followed, and so I went my way.

It is well for me that I cannot hear music when I will; assuredly I should not have such intense pleasure as comes to me now and then by haphazard. As I walked on, forgetting all about the distance, and reaching home before I knew I was halfway there, I felt gratitude to my unknown benefactor—a state of mind I have often experienced in the days long gone by. It happened at times—not in my barest days, but in those of decent poverty—that some one in the house where I lodged played the piano—and how it rejoiced me when this came to pass! I say "played the piano"—a phrase that covers much. For my own part, I was very tolerant; anything that could by the largest interpretation be called music, I welcomed and was thankful for; even "five-finger exercises" I found, at moments, better than nothing. For it was when I was laboring at my desk that the notes of the instrument were grateful and helpful to me. Some men, I believe, would

have been driven frantic under the circumstances; to me, anything like a musical sound always came as a godsend; it tuned my thoughts; it made the words flow. Even the street organs put me in a happy mood; I owe many a page to them—written when I should else have been sunk in bilious gloom.

More than once, too, when I was walking London streets by night, penniless and miserable, music from an open window has stayed my step, even as yesterday. Very well can I remember such a moment in Eaton Square, one night when I was going back to Chelsea, tired, hungry, racked by frustrated passions. I had tramped miles and miles, in the hope of wearying myself so that I could sleep and forget. Then came the piano notes—I saw that there was festival in the house—and for an hour or so I revelled as none of the bidden guests could possibly be doing. And when I reached my poor lodgings, I was no longer envious nor mad with desires, but as I fell asleep I thanked the unknown mortal who had played for me, and given me peace.

GEORGE GISSING.

THE TEMPEST

TO-DAY I have read "The Tempest." It is perhaps the play that I love best, and, because I seem to myself to know it so well, I commonly pass it over in opening the book. Yet, as always in regard to Shakespeare, having read it

once more, I find that my knowledge was less complete than I supposed. So it would be, live as long as one might; so it would ever be, whilst one had strength to turn the pages and a mind left to read them.

I like to believe that this was the poet's last work, that he wrote it in his home at Stratford, walking day by day in the fields which had taught his boyhood to love rural England. It is ripe fruit of the supreme imagination, perfect craft of the master hand. For a man whose life's business it has been to study the English tongue, what joy can equal that of marking the happy ease wherewith Shakespeare surpasses, in mere command of words, every achievement of those even who, apart from him, are great? I could fancy that, in "The Tempest," he wrought with a peculiar consciousness of this power, smiling as the word of inimitable felicity, the phrase of incomparable cadence, was whispered to him by the Ariel that was his genius. He seems to sport with language, amuse himself with new discovery of its resources. From king to beggar, men of every rank and every order of mind have spoken with his lips; he has uttered the lore of fairyland; now it pleases him to create a being neither man nor fairy, a something between brute and human nature, and to endow its purposes with words. These words, how they smack of the moist and spawning earth, of the life of creatures that cannot rise above the soil! We do not think of it enough; we stint our wonder because we fall short in ap-

preciation. A miracle is worked before us, and we scarce give heed; it has become familiar to our minds as any other of nature's marvels, which we rarely pause to reflect upon.

"The Tempest" contains the noblest meditative passage in all the plays; that which embodies Shakespeare's final view of life, and is the inevitable quotation of all who would sum the teachings of philosophy. It contains his most exquisite lyrics, his tenderest love passages, and one glimpse of fairyland which—I cannot but think—outshines the utmost beauty of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Prospero's farewell to the "elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves." Again a miracle; these are things which cannot be staled by repetition. Come to them often as you will, they are ever fresh as though new minted from the brain of the poet. Being perfect, they can never droop under that satiety which arises from the perception of fault; their virtue can never be entirely savored as to leave no pungency of gusto for the next approach.

Among the many reasons which make me glad to have been born in England, one of the first is that I read Shakespeare in my mother tongue. If I try to imagine myself as one who cannot know him face to face, who hears him only speaking from afar, and that in accents which only through the laboring intelligence can touch the living soul, there comes upon me a sense of chill discouragement, of dreary deprivation. I am wont to think that I can read Homer, and, as-

suredly, if any man enjoys him, it is I; but can I for a moment dream that Homer yields me all his music, that his word is to me as to him who walked by the Hellenic shore when Hellas lived? I know that there reaches me across the vast of time no more than a faint and broken echo; I know that it would be fainter still, but for its blending with those memories of youth which are as a glimmer of the world's primeval glory. Let every land have joy of its poet; for the poet is the land itself, all its greatness and its sweetness, all that incommunicable heritage for which men live and die. As I close the book, love and reverence possess me. Whether does my full heart turn to the great Enchanter, or to the Island upon which he has laid his spell? I know not. I cannot think of them apart. In the love and reverence awakened by that voice of voices, Shakespeare and England are but one.

GEORGE GISSING.

MONEY

IT IS a pleasant thing enough to be able to spend a little money without fear when the desire for some indulgence is strong upon one; but how much pleasanter the ability to give money away! Greatly as I relish the comforts of my wonderful new life, no joy it has brought me equals that of coming in aid to another's necessity. The man for ever pinched in circumstances can live only for himself. It is all very well to talk about doing

moral good; in practice, there is little scope or hope for anything of that kind in a state of material hardship. To-day I have sent S—— a cheque for fifty pounds; it will come as a very boon of heaven, and assuredly blesseth him that gives as much as him that takes. A poor fifty pounds, which the wealthy fool throws away upon some idle or base fantasy, and never thinks of it; yet to S——it will mean life and light. And I, to whom this power of benefaction is such a new thing, sign the cheque with a hand trembling, so glad and proud I am. In the days gone by, I have sometimes given money, but with trembling of another kind; it was as likely as not that I myself, some black foggy morning, might have to go begging for my own dire needs. That is one of the bitter curses of poverty; it leaves no right to be generous. Of my abundance—abundance to me, though starveling pittance in the view of everyday prosperity—I can give with happiest freedom; I feel myself a man, and no crouching slave with his back ever ready for the lash of circumstance. There are those, I know, who thank the gods amiss, and most easily does this happen in the matter of wealth. But oh, how good it is to desire little, and to have a little more than enough!

GEORGE GISSING.

DECEMBER 15

THROUGH THE FORESTS*

SOON after leaving Andaki (November 2, 1888), and crossing a broad ridge, we came upon a vast abandoned clearing. Probably a year had elapsed since the people had fled, and their settlements had been consumed with fire, or the banana plants were choked by the voracious undergrowth and wild plants, and the elephants had trampled through and through, and sported for months among the wasted groves, and over the crushed Musa plants, through phrynia flourishing two fathoms deep, and where the stumps of cut trees had sprouted and grown until their tufted tops were joined to one another in one great thick carpet of bush. Through this we carved our way with brandished billhooks and cutlasses; the native women had lost the track, and were bewildered by the wildly luxuriant shrubbery, under which we sweated in the damp hot-house heat, and ploughed our way through the deep green sea, until after ten hours we came to a babbling rillet, and must perforce camp from sheer exhaustion, though we had made but five miles.

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On the morning of the fourth we resumed the task, to slash, cut, creep, and crawl, bore through, in and out, to clamber over logs, tread carefully over gaping rifts in the reeking compost, bend under logs, to tunnel away with might and main, to drive through—a hungry column of men was behind, a wilderness before us—to crash headlong through the plants, veer to the left, and now to the right, to press on and on, to sharpen the weapons on the stones of the brook; to take a hasty drink to satisfy our thirst, and again to the work. Cleave away merrily, boys, sever those creepers; cut those saplings down! No way now? then widen that tame hole in the bush clump! Come, strike with billhooks and sword, axe and cutlass! We must not die like fools in this demon world! This way and that, through and through, until after sixteen hours we had cut a crooked channel through the awful waste, and stood once more under the lordly crowns of the primæval forest.

Paddy's traditional patchy clothes was a dress suit compared to mine, as I stood woefully regarding the rents and tatters and threads waving in tassels from my breeches and shirt; and the men smiled, and one said we looked like rats dragged through the teeth of traps, which I thought was not a bad simile. But we had no time for talk; we ate a couple of roast plantains for lunch, and continued our journey, and by 3 P. M. were within half an hour of the Ihuru River.

The next day, before it was full daylight, we were filing along an elephant track that ran paral-

lel with the Ihuru, which was at this time one raging series of rapids its whole length, and sounding its unceasing uproar in our ears. Numbers of deep tributaries were waded through; but we maintained a quick pace, owing to the broad track of the elephants, and by the usual hour of the afternoon nine miles had been covered.

Thirteen Zanzibaris of the rear column, and one of the Danagla soldiers of Emin Pasha, had succumbed during the last few days, and I do not know how many Madis and Manyuema.

On the evening of the sixth, after a march of eight miles, I became impressed with the necessity of finding food shortly, unless we were to witness wholesale mortality. Starvation is hard to bear, but when loads must be carried upon empty stomachs, and the marches are long, the least break in the continuity of supply brings with it a train of diseases which soon thins the ranks. Our Nyanza people were provident, and eked their stores with mushrooms and wild fruit; but the feeble manioc-poisoned men of the rear column, Madis and Manyuema, were utterly heedless of advice and example.

A youth named Amani, who looked rather faint, was adjured to tell me the truth about what he had eaten the last two days.

"I will," he said. "My mess had a fair provision of plantain flour that would have kept us with ease two days longer, but Sulimani, who carried it, put it down by the roadside while he went to gather mushrooms. When he returned the food

HENRY M. STANLEY

was gone. He says the Manyuema had stolen it. Each one of us then on reaching camp last night set out to hunt for mushrooms, out of which we made a gruel. That is what we had to eat last night for supper. This morning we have fasted, but we are going to hunt up mushrooms again."

"And what will you eat to-morrow?"

"To-morrow is in the hands of God. I will live in hopes that I shall find something."

This youth, he was only nineteen, had carried sixty pound of cartridges in the meantime, and would carry it again to-morrow, and the next day, until he dropped, and measured his length with eyes upturned to the dark cope of leaves above, to be left there to mildew and rot; for out of nothing nothing can be extracted to feed hungry men. He was only a solitary instance of over 400 people.

We reached a Manyuema Camp, and Uledi recognized it as being a place where he had halted during a forage tour to the west of the Ihuru, while he was waiting for Messrs. Jephson and Nelson at Ipoto, and the advance column was journeying to Ibwiri in November, 1887.

On the 7th a halt was ordered, that a column might be sent under Uledi to search the clearing of Andari, six miles north-northwest of the camp, but over a hundred were so weak that they were unable to go, whereupon the messes were ordered to bring their pots up, and three handfuls of flour were placed in each to make gruel with, that they might have strength to reach the plantation.

On the 8th, about 200 remained silent in camp awaiting the foragers. In the afternoon, perceiving that it was too long a fast to wait for them, we served out more plantain flour.

On the 9th, the foragers had not arrived. Two men had died in camp. One reeled from the effects of a poisonous fungus, as they came to get another ration of flour for their gruel; their steps were more feeble; the bones of the sternum were fearfully apparent. Three days would find us all perished, but we were hopeful that every minute we should hear the murmur of the returning column.

On the morning of the 10th, anxious for the European provisions which we were carrying for the officers at Fort Bodo, I had them examined, and discovered to my consternation that fifty-seven tins of meat, teas, coffees, milks, were short —had been eaten by the Manyuema. If a look had potency sufficient to blast them, they would have speedily been reduced to ashes. "Dear me, how could the tins have vanished?" asked the chief Sadi. Ah, how? But the provision boxes were taken from his party, and Winchester and Maxim ammunition cases were served instead to them as freight.

At 2 P. M. the column of foragers returned, bringing from three to six days' provisions, which they had gathered from an abandoned plantation. The bearers had refreshed themselves previous to gathering. Now, in return for my gruel, each member had to refund me one pound of flour, as

my reserve store, and one pound for the sick, who were deprived of the power to forage, and who were rejected by the messes. So that in this manner the sick received about eight pounds of flour, or dried plantains, and I owned a reserve of 200 pounds for future use.

Within an hour and a half on the 11th we had reached Kilonga-Longa's ferry. The natives, fearing a repetition of his raids to the west of the Ihuru, had destroyed every canoe, and thus prevented me from crossing to pay Kilonga-Longa another visit, and to settle some accounts with him. The river was also in flood, and a gaunt and hungry wilderness stretched all round us. There was no other way for it than to follow the Ihuru upward until we could find means to cross to the east, or left side. Our course was now northeast by north.

On the 12th, we followed a track, along which quite a tribe of pigmies must have passed. It was lined with amoma fruit-skins, and shells of nuts, and the crimson rinds of phrynia berries. No wood-beans, or fenessi, or mabungu, are to be found in this region, as on the south bank of Ituri River. On reaching camp, I found that at the ferry, near the native camp at which we starved four days, six people had succumbed—a Madi, from a poisonous fungus, the Lado soldier, who was speared above Wasp Rapids, two Soudanese of the rear-column, a Manyuema boy in the service of Mr. Bonny, and Ibrahim, a fine young Zanzibari, from a poisoned skewer in the foot.

During the 13th the great forest was perceptibly improved for travel. Our elephant and game track had brought us across another track leading easterly from Andari, and both joined presently, developing to a highway much patronized by the pigmy tribes. This we followed for two hours. We could tell where they had stopped to light the pipes, and to crack nuts, and trap game, and halt to gossip. The twigs were broken three feet from the ground, showing that they were snapped by dwarfs. Where it was a little muddy the path showed high delicate insteps, proving their ancient ancestry and aristocratic descent, and small feet not larger than those of young English misses of eight years old. The path improved as we tramped along; it grew a highway of promise. Camps of the dwarfs were numerous. The soil was ochreous, the trees were larger, and towered to magnificent heights.

I observed as we filed into camp that it was time to obtain a further supply of food, and rest somewhere, the bearing of the people lacked confidence, their forms were shrinking under the terrible task, and perpetual daily toil and round of marching and hunger. I could have wept at the excess of misfortunes which weighed us daily lower toward the grave; but we had been for so long strained to bear violent vicissitudes, and so frequently afflicted with sights of anguish and suffering, that we were reduced to hear each day's tale of calamity in sorrowful silence. What losses we had already borne were beyond power of plaint and tear to

restore. The morrow's grief awaited us, as certain as the morrow's sun; and to dwell upon the sorrowful past was to unfit us for what we had yet to bear.

To make 230 loads equal to the daily lessening number of carriers was a most aggravating task. Not one out of twenty men but made some complaint of a severe ulcer, a headache, or threatened rupture, undefined bodily pains, a whitlow, a thorn in the foot, rheumatism, fever, etc. The loads remained always the same, but the carriers died.

On the 14th, the expedition, after a six hours' march, approached Anduta and Andikumu. As the advance guard was pressing in over the logs and débris of the prostrated forest, some arrows flew, and two men fell wounded, and immediately boxes and bales were dropped, and quite a lively skirmish with the tall-hatted natives occurred; but in half an hour the main body of the caravan filed in, to find such a store of abnormally large plantains that the ravenous men were in ecstasies.

In extent the clearing was equal to the famous one of Ibwiri. It was situate in the bosom of hills which rose to the east, west, and south. Along one of the tracks we saw the blazings of the Manyuema on the trees, and one of the villages was in ruins; but the size of the clearing had baffled the ravaging horde in their attempt to destroy the splendid plantain groves.

On examining the boxes of ammunition before stacking them for the night, it was found that

Corporal Dayn Mohammed had not brought his load in, and we ascertained that he had laid it at the base of a big tree near the path. Four headmen were at once ordered to return with the Soudanese corporal to recover the box.

Arriving near the spot, they saw quite a tribe of pigmies, men, women and children, gathered around two pigmy warriors, who were trying to test the weight of the box by the grummet at each end. Our headmen, curious to see what they would do with the box, lay hidden closely, for the eyes of the little people are exceedingly sharp. Every member of the tribe seemed to have some device to suggest, and the little boys hopped about on one leg, spanking their hips in irrepressible delight at the find, and the tiny women carrying their tinier babies at their backs vociferated the traditional wise woman's counsel. Then a doughty man cut a light pole, and laid it through the grummets, and all the small people cheered shrilly with joy at the genius displayed by them in inventing a method for heaving along the weighty case of Remington ammunition. The Hercules and the Milo of the tribe put forth their utmost strength, and raised the box up level with their shoulders, and staggered away into the bush. But just then a harmless shot was fired, and the big men rushed forward with loud shouts, and then began a chase; and one over-fat young fellow of about seventeen was captured and brought to our camp as a prize. We saw the little Jack Horner, too fat by many pounds; but the story

belongs to the headmen, who delivered it with infinite humor.

Now let us look at this great forest (as we began our traverse in December, 1888), not for a scientific analysis of its woods and productions, but to get a real idea of what it is like. It covers such a vast area, it is so varied and yet so uniform in its features, that it would require many books to treat of it properly. Nay, if we regard it too closely, a legion of specialists would be needed. We have no time to examine the buds and the flowers or the fruit, and the many marvels of vegetation, or to regard the fine differences between bark and leaf in the various towering trees around us, or to compare the different exudations in the viscous or vitrified gums, or which drip in milky tears of amber globules, or opaline pastils, or to observe the industrious ants which ascend and descend up and down the tree shafts, whose deep wrinkles of bark are as valleys and ridges to the insect armies, or to wait for the furious struggle which will surely ensue between them and yonder army of red ants. Nor at this time do we care to probe into that mighty mass of dead tree, brown and porous as a sponge, for already it is a mere semblance of a prostrate log. Within it is alive with minute tribes. It would charm an entomologist. Put your ear to it, and you hear a distinct murmurous hum. It is the stir and movement of insect life in many forms, matchless in size, glorious in color, radiant in livery, rejoicing in their

occupations, exultant in their fierce but brief life, most insatiate of their kind, ravaging, foraging, fighting, destroying, building, and swarming everywhere and exploring everything. Lean but your hand on a tree, measure but your length on the ground, seat yourself on a fallen branch, and you will then understand what venom, fury, voracity, and activity breathes around you. Open your notebook, the page attracts a dozen butterflies, a honey-bee hovers over your hand; other forms of bees dash for your eyes; a wasp buzzes in your ear, a huge hornet menaces your face, an army of pismires come marching to your feet. Some are already crawling up, and will presently be digging their scissor-like mandibles in your neck. Woe! woe!

And yet it is all beautiful—but there must be no sitting or lying down on this seething earth. It is not like your pine groves and your dainty woods in England. It is a tropic world, and to enjoy it you must keep slowly moving.

Imagine the whole of France and the Spanish peninsula closely packed with trees varying from 20 to 180 feet high, whose crowns of foliage interlace and prevent any view of sky and sun, and each tree from a few inches to four feet in diameter. Then from tree to tree run cables from two inches to fifteen inches in diameter, up and down in loops and festoons and W's and badly-formed M's; fold them round the trees in great tight coils, until they have run up the entire height, like endless anacondas; let them flower and leaf

luxuriantly, and mix up above with the foliage of the trees to hide the sun, then from the highest branches let fall the ends of the cables reaching near to the ground by hundreds with frayed extremities, for these represent the air roots of the Epiphytes; let slender cords hang down also in tassels with open threadwork at the ends. Work others through and through these as confusedly as possible, and pendent from branch to branch—with absolute disregard of material, and at every fork and on every horizontal branch plant cabbage-like lichens of the largest kind, and broad spear-leaved plants—these would represent the elephant-eared plant—and orchids and clusters of vegetable marvels, and a drapery of delicate ferns which abound. Now cover tree, branch, twig, and creeper with a thick moss like a green fur. Where the forest is compact as described above, we may not do more than cover the ground closely with a thick crop of phyrnia, and amoma, and dwarf bush; but if the lightning, as frequently happens, has severed the crown of a proud tree, and let in the sunlight, or split a giant down to its roots, or scorched it dead, or a tornado has been uprooting a few trees, then the race for air and light has caused a multitude of baby trees to rush upward—crowded, crushing, and treading upon and strangling one another, until the whole is one impervious bush.

But the average forest is a mixture of these scenes. There will probably be groups of fifty trees standing like columns of a cathedral, gray

and solemn in the twilight, and in the midst there will be a naked and gaunt patriarch, bleached white, and around it will have grown a young community, each young tree clambering upward to become heir to the area of light and sunshine once occupied by the sire. The law of primogeniture reigns here also.

There is also death from wounds, sickness, decay, hereditary disease and old age, and various accidents thinning the forest, removing the unfit, the weakly, the unadaptable, as among humanity. Let us suppose a tall chief among the giants, like an insolent son of Anak. By a head he lifts himself above his fellows—the monarch of all he surveys; but his pride attracts the lightning, and he becomes shivered to the roots, he topples, declines, and wounds half a dozen other trees in his fall. This is why we see so many tumorous excrescences, great goitrous swellings, and deformed trunks. The parasites again have frequently been outlived by the trees they had half strangled, and the deep marks of their forceful pressure may be traced up to the forks. Some have sickened by intense rivalry of other kinds, and have perished at an immature age; some have grown with a deep crook in their stems, by a prostrate log which had fallen and pressed them obliquely. Some have been injured by branches, fallen during a storm, and dwarfed untimely. Some have been gnawed by rodents, or have been sprained by elephants leaning on them to rub their prurient hides, and ants of all kinds have done infinite mischief.

Some have been pecked at by birds, until we see ulcerous sores exuding great globules of gum, and frequently tall and short nomads have tried their axes, spears, and knives, on the trees, and hence we see that decay and death are busy here as with us.

To complete the mental picture of this ruthless forest, the ground should be strewn thickly with half-formed humus of rotting twigs, leaves. branches; every few yards there should be a prostrate giant, a reeking compost of rotten fibers, and departed generations of insects, and colonies of ants, half veiled with masses of vines and shrouded by the leafage of a multitude of baby saplings, lengthy briars and calamus in many fathom lengths, and every mile or so there should be muddy streams, stagnant creeks, and shallow pools, green with duckweed, leaves of lotus and lilies, and a greasy green scum composed of millions of finite growths. Then people this vast region of woods with numberless fragments of tribes, who are at war with each other and who live apart from ten to fifty miles in the midst of a prostrate forest, amongst whose ruins they have planted the plantain, banana, manioc, beans, tobacco, colocassia, gourds, melons, etc., and who, in order to make their villages inaccessible, have resorted to every means of defence suggested to wild men by the nature of their lives. They have planted skewers along their paths, and cunningly hidden them under an apparently stray leaf, or on the lee side of a log, by striding over which the

naked foot is pierced, and the intruder is either killed from the poison smeared on the tops of the skewers, or lamed for months. They have piled up branches and have formed barricades of great trees, and they lie in wait behind with sheaves of poisoned arrows, wooden spears hardened in fire and smeared with poison.

The primæval forest, that is that old growth untouched by man, and left since the earliest time to thrive and die, one age after another, is easily distinguishable from that part which at some time or another afforded shelter for man. The trees are taller and straighter, and of more colossal girth. It has frequently glades presenting little difficulty for travel, the invariable obstructions being the arum, phrynia, and amoma. The ground is firmer and more compact, and the favorite camping grounds for the pigmy nomads are located in such places. When the plants and small bushes are cut down, we have an airy, sylvan, and cool temple, delightful for a dwelling.

Then comes the forest which during a few generations has obliterated all evidences of former husbandry. A few of the trees, especially of the soft-wooded kind, have grown to equal height with the ancient patriarchs, but as soon as man abandoned the clearing, hosts of nameless trees, shrubs, and plants have riotously hastened to avail themselves of his absence, and the race for air and light is continued for many years; consequently the undergrowth by the larger quantity of sunshine becomes luxuriant, and there are few places pene-

trable in it without infinite labor. Among these a variety of palms will be found, especially the Elais and Raphia vinifera.

And after this comes the bush proper, the growth of a few years, which admits no ingress whatever within its shade. We are therefore obliged to tunnel through stifling masses of young vegetation, so matted and tangled together that one fancies it would be easier to travel over the top were it of equal and consistent thickness and level. Vigorous young trees are found imbedded in these solid and compact masses of vegetation, and these support the climbing plants, the vines, and creepers. Under these, after a pathway has been scooped out, the unshod feet are in danger from the thorns, and the sharp cut stalks, which are apt to pierce the feet and lacerate the legs.

This last was the character of the bush mostly near the river. Both banks presented numberless old clearings and abandoned sites; and as the stream was the only means of communication employed by the tribes, the only way of effecting any progress was by laborious cutting.

The clearings which had been abandoned within a year exhibited veritable wonders of vegetable life, of unsurpassed fecundity, and bewildering variety of species. The charred poles of the huts became the supports of climbers whose vivid green leaves soon shrouded the ugliness of desolation, and every upright and stump assumed the appearance of a miniature bower, or a massive piece of columned ruin. As the stumps were fre-

quently twenty feet high, and were often seen in twins, the plants had gravitated across the space between and after embracing had continued their growth along the length of one another, and had formed in this manner an umbrageous arch, and had twisted themselves in endless lengths around the supports until it became difficult to find what supported such masses of delicate vines. In some instances they had formed lofty twin towers with an arched gateway between, resembling a great ruin of an old castle, and the whole was gay with purple and white flowers. The silvered boles of ancient primæval giants long ago ringed by the axe and doomed to canker and decay, and the great gaunt, far-spreading arms and branchlets had been clothed by vines a hundredfold until they seemed like clouds of vivid green, which, under the influence of sudden gusts, streamed with countless tendrils, or swayed like immense curtains.

When marching along with the column, or encamped for the night, the murmur of voices was not congenial to nourishing any fine sentiments about the forest. We suffered too much hunger, and sustained such protracted misery; we were preyed upon too often in patience, and temper, and forbearance. Our clothes suited well enough for open country, were no protection against the hostilities of the bush. But if once we absented ourselves from camp, and the voices of the men died away, and we forgot our miseries, and were not absorbed by the sense of the many inconveniences, an awe of the forest rushed upon the soul

and filled the mind. The voice sounded with rolling echoes, as in a cathedral. One became conscious of its eerie strangeness, the absence of sunshine, its subdued light, and marveled at the queer feeling of loneliness, while inquiringly looking around to be assured that this loneliness was no delusion. It was as if one stood amid the inhabitatnts of another world. We enjoyed life—the one vegetable, the other human. Standing there so massive and colossal, so silent and still, and yet with such solemn severity of majesty, it did seem curious that the two lives, so like in some sense, were yet so incommunicable. It would have suited the fitness of things, I thought, had a wrinkled old patriarch addressed me with the gravity and seriousness of a Methuselah, or an Achillean and powerful bombax, with his buttressed feet planted firm in the ground, had disdainfully demanded any business in that assembly of stately forest kings.

But what thoughts were kindled as we peeped out from an opening in the woods and looked across the darkening river which reflected the advancing tempest, and caught a view of the mighty army of trees—their heights as various as their kind, all rigid in the gloaming, awaiting in stern array the war with the storm. The coming wind has concentrated its terrors for destruction, the forked lightning is seen darting its spears of white flame across the front of infinite hosts of clouds. Out of their depths issues the thunderbolt, and the march of the winds is

heard coming to the onset. Suddenly the trees, which have stood still—as in a painted canvas—awaiting the shock with secure tranquillity, are seen to bow their tops in unison, followed by universal swaying and straining as though a wild panic had seized them. They reel this way and that, but they are restrained from flight by sturdy stems and fixed roots, and the strong buttresses which maintain them upright. Pressed backward to a perilous length they recover from the first blow, and dart their heads in furious waves forward, and the glory of the war between the forest and the storm is at its height. Legion after legion of clouds ride over the wind-tossed crests, there is a crashing and roaring, a loud soughing and moaning, shrill screaming of squalls, and groaning of countless woods. There are mighty sweeps from the great tree-kings, as though mighty strokes were being dealt; there is a world-wide rustling of foliage, as though in gleeful approval of the vast strength of their sires; there are flashes of pale green light, as the lesser battalions are roused up to the fight by the example of their brave ancients. Our own spirits are aroused by the grand conflict—the Berserker rage is contagious. On our souls we applaud the rush and leveling force of the wind, and for a second are ready to hail the victor; but the magnificent array of the forest champions with streaming locks, the firmness with which the vast army of trees rise in unison with their leaders, the rapturous quiver of the bush below inspire a belief that they will win if

they but persevere. The lightning darts here and there with splendor of light and scathing flame, the thunders explode with deafening crashes, reverberating with terrible sounds among the army of woods, the black clouds roll over and darken the prospect; and as cloud becomes involved within cloud, in the shifting pale light, we have a last view of the wild war, we are stunned by the fury of the tempest, and the royal rage of the forest, when down comes the deluge of tropic rain which in a short time extinguishes the white heat wrath of the elements, and soothes to stillness the noble anger of the woods.

HENRY MORTON STANLEY.

DECEMBER 16

(Jane Austen, born December 16, 1775)

MR. COLLINS PROPOSES*

THE next day opened a new scene at Longbourn. Mr. Collins made his declaration in form. Having resolved to do it without loss of time, as his leave of absence extended only to the following Saturday, and having no feelings of diffidence to make it distressing to himself even at the moment, he set about it in a very orderly manner with all the observances which he supposed a regular part of the business. On finding Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, and one of the younger girls together, soon after breakfast, he addressed the mother in these words:

"May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honor of a private audience with her in the course of this morning?"

Before Elizabeth had time for anything but a blush of surprise, Mrs. Bennet instantly answered:

"Oh, dear! Yes, certainly. I am sure Lizzy will be very happy—I am sure she can have no objection. Come, Kitty, I want you upstairs."

*From "Pride and Prejudice."

And gathering her work together, she was hastening away, when Elizabeth called out:

"Dear ma'am, do not go. I beg you will not go. Mr. Collins must excuse me. He can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear. I am going away myself."

"No, no; nonsense, Lizzy! I desire you will stay where you are." And upon Elizabeth's seeming really, with vexed and embarrassed looks, about to escape, she added, "Lizzy, I insist upon you staying and hearing Mr. Collins!"

Elizabeth would not oppose such an injunction; and a moment's consideration making her also sensible that it would be wisest to get it over as soon and as quietly as possible, she sat down again, and tried to conceal, by incessant employment, the feelings which were divided between distress and diversion. Mrs. Bennet and Kitty walked off, and, as soon as they were gone, Mr. Collins began:

"Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there not been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you that I have your respected mother's permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble; my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I

am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it will be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did."

The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him further, and he continued:

"My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly, which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honor of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked, too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool—that she said: 'Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry. Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman, for my sake and for your own; let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her.' Allow me, by the way, to observe,

my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favor of matrimony. It remains to be told why my views were directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighborhood, where I assure you there are many amiable young women. But the fact is, that being, as I am, to inherit this estate after the death of your honored father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible when the melancholy event takes place—which, however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now nothing remains for me but to assure you, in the most animated language, of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds in the four-per-cents., which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure

yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married."

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

"You are too hasty, sir," she cried. "You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honor of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them."

"I am not now to learn," replied Mr. Collins, with a formal wave of the hand, "that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for this favor; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long."

"Upon my word, sir," cried Elizabeth, "your hope is rather an extraordinary one after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make you so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me I am perfectly persuaded she would find me in every respect ill-qualified for the situation."

"Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so," said Mr. Collins, very gravely—"but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would at all disapprove of you. And you may be certain that when I have the honor of seeing her again I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications."

"Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and, by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent you being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled." And rising, as she thus spoke, she would have quitted the room had not Mr. Collins thus addressed her:

"When I do myself the honor of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favorable answer than you have now given me; though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character."

"Really, Mr. Collins," cried Elizabeth, with some warmth, "you puzzle me exceedingly. If

what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one."

"You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses are merely words, of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these. It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer you would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, by connections with the family of DeBourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration that, in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion is unhappily so small that it will, in all likelihood, undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must, therefore, conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females."

"I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer?

Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart."

"You are uniformly charming!" cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; "and I am persuaded that, when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable."

To such perseverance in wilful self-deception Elizabeth would make no reply, and immediately and in silence withdrew, determined that, if he persisted in considering her repeated refusals as flattering encouragement, to apply to her father, whose negative might be uttered in such a manner as must be decisive, and whose behavior, at least, could not be mistaken for the affectation and coquetry of an elegant female.

Mr. Collins was not left long to the silent contemplation of his successful love; for Mrs. Bennet, having dawdled about in the vestibule to watch for the end of the conference, no sooner saw Elizabeth open the door and with quick step pass her toward the staircase, than she entered the breakfast room, and congratulated both him and herself in warm terms on the happy prospect of their nearer connection. Mr. Collins received and returned these felicitations with equal pleasure, and then proceeded to relate the particulars of their interview, with the result which he trusted he had every reason to be satisfied, since the refusal which his cousin had steadfastly given him would natur-

ally flow from her bashful modesty and the genuine delicacy of her character.

This information, however, startled Mrs. Bennet; she would have been glad to be equally satisfied that her daughter had meant to encourage him by protesting against his proposals, but she dared not to believe it, and could not help saying so.

"But depend upon it, Mr. Collins," she added, "that Lizzy shall be brought to reason. I will speak to her about it myself directly. She is a very headstrong, foolish girl, and does not know her own interest; but I will make her know it!"

"Pardon me for interrupting you, madam," cried Mr. Collins; "but if she is really headstrong and foolish, I know not whether she would altogether be a very desirable wife to a man in my situation, who naturally looks for happiness in the marriage state. If, therefore, she actually persists in rejecting my suit, perhaps it were better not to force her into accepting me, because, if liable to such defects of temper, she could not add much to my felicity."

"Sir, you quite misunderstand me," said Mr. Bennet, alarmed. "Lizzy is only headstrong in such matters as these. In everything else she is as good-natured a girl as ever lived. I will go directly to Mr. Bennet, and we shall very soon settle it with her, I am sure."

She would not give him time to reply, but hurrying instantly to her husband, called out, as she entered the library:

"Oh, Mr. Bennet, you are wanted immediately;

we are all in an uproar! You must come and make Lizzy marry Mr. Collins, for she vows she will not have him; and if you do not make haste he will change his mind and not have her!"

Mr. Bennet raised his eyes from his book as she entered, and fixed them on her face with a calm unconcern, which was not in the least altered by her communication.

"I have not the pleasure of understanding you," said he, when she had finished her speech. "Of what are you talking?"

"Of Mr. Collins and Lizzy. Lizzy declares she will not have Mr. Collins, and Mr. Collins begins to say that he will not have Lizzy."

"And what am I to do on the occasion? It seems a hopeless business."

"Speak to Lizzy about it yourself. Tell her that you insist upon her marrying him."

"Let her be called down. She shall hear my opinion."

Mrs. Bennet rang the bell, and Miss Elizabeth was summoned to the library.

"Come here, child," cried her father, as she appeared. "I have sent for you on an affair of importance. I understand that Mr. Collins has made you an offer of marriage. Is it true?" Elizabeth replied that it was. "Very well—and this offer of marriage you have refused?"

"I have, sir."

"Very well. We now come to the point. Your mother insists upon your accepting it. Is it not so, Mrs. Bennet?"

"Yes, or I will never see her again."

"An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents. Your mother will never see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you do!"

Elizabeth could not but smile at such a conclusion of such a beginning; but Mrs. Bennet, who had persuaded herself that her husband regarded the affair as she wished, was excessively disappointed.

"What do you mean, Mr. Bennet, by talking in this way! You promised me to insist upon her marrying him."

"My dear," replied her husband. "I have two small favors to request. First, that you will allow me the free use of my understanding on the present occasion; and secondly, of my room. I shall be glad to have the library to myself as soon as may be."

Not yet, however, in spite of her disappointment in her husband, did Mrs. Bennet give up the point. She talked to Elizabeth again and again; coaxed and threatened her by turns. She endeavored to secure Jane in her interest, but Jane, with all possible mildness, declined interfering and Elizabeth, sometimes with real earnestness, and sometimes with playful gayety, replied to her attacks. Though her manner varied, however, her determination never did.

Mr. Collins, meanwhile, was meditating in solitude on what had passed. He thought too well of himself to comprehend on what motive his cousin

could refuse him; and though his pride was hurt he suffered in no other way. His regard for her was quite imaginary, and the possibility of her deserving her mother's reproach prevented his feeling any regret.

While the family were in this confusion, Charlotte Lucas came to spend the day with them. She was met in the vestibule by Lydia, who, flying to her, cried, in a half whisper, "I am glad you are come, for there is such fun here! What do you think has happened this morning? Mr. Collins has made an offer to Lizzy, and she will not have him."

Charlotte had hardly time to answer before they were joined by Kitty, who came to tell the same news; and no sooner had they entered the breakfast room where Mrs. Bennet was alone, than she likewise began on the subject, calling on Miss Lucas for her compassion, and entreating her to persuade her friend Lizzy to comply with the wishes of all her family. "Pray do, my dear Miss Lucas," she added, in a melancholy tone; "for nobody is on my side, nobody takes part with me; I am cruelly used; nobody feels for my poor nerves."

Charlotte's reply was spared by the entrance of Jane and Elizabeth.

"Ay, there she comes," continued Mrs. Bennet, "looking as unconcerned as may be, and caring no more for us than if we were at York, provided she can have her own way. But I tell you what, Miss Lizzy, if you take it into your head to go on refusing every offer of marriage in this way, you will never get a husband at all; and I am sure I do

not know who is to maintain you when your father is dead. *I* shall not be able to keep you—and so I warn you. I have done with you from this very day. I told you in the library, you know, that I should never speak to you again, and you will find me as good as my word. I have no pleasure in talking to undutiful children. Not that *I* have much pleasure, indeed, in talking to anybody. People who suffer as I do from nervous complaints can have no great inclination for talking. Nobody can tell what I suffer! But it is always so; those who do not complain are never pitied."

Her daughters listened in silence to this effusion, sensible that any attempt to reason with or soothe her would only increase the irritation. She talked on, therefore, without interruption from any of them till they were joined by Mr. Collins, who entered with an air more stately than usual, and on perceiving whom, she said to the girls:

"Now I do insist upon it that you, all of you, hold your tongues and let Mr. Collins and me have a little conversation together."

Elizabeth passed quietly out of the room, Jane and Kitty followed, but Lydia stood her ground, determined to hear all she could; and Charlotte, detained first by the civility of Mr. Collins, whose inquiries after herself and all her family were very minute, and then by a little curiosity, satisfied herself with walking to the window and pretending not to hear. In a doleful voice Mrs. Bennet thus began the projected conversation: "Oh, Mr. Collins!"

"My dear madam," replied he, "let us be forever silent on this point. Far be it from me," he presently continued, in a voice that marked his displeasure, "to resent the behavior of your daughter. Resignation to inevitable evils is the duty of us all—the peculiar duty of a young man who has been so fortunate as I have been, in early preferment; and, I trust, I am resigned. Perhaps not the less so from feeling a doubt of my possible happiness had my fair cousin honored me with her hand; for I have often observed that resignation is never so perfect as when the blessing denied begins to lose somewhat of its value in our estimation. You will not, I hope, consider me as showing any disrespect to your family, my dear madam, by thus withdrawing my pretensions to your daughter's favor, without having paid yourself and Mr. Bennet the compliment of requesting you to interpose your authority in my behalf. My conduct may, I fear, be objectionable in having accepted my dismission from your daughter's lips instead of your own, but we are all liable to error. I have certainly meant well through the whole affair. My object has been to secure an amiable companion for myself, with due consideration for the advantage of all your family; and if my manner has been at all reprehensible, I here beg leave to apologize."

JANE AUSTEN.

END OF VOLUME XXIII

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